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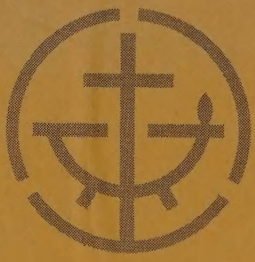

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PRACTICAL MYSTICISM
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Two Courses of Lectures given in London in March & April 1922 *on "The Sacred Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries: Essentials of Re-Generation and Perfection."*

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BY THE REV.

HOLDEN EDWARD SAMPSON

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"THE TRUE MYSTIC," "EK-KLESIA,"
"THE HAPPIEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD," ETC.

Editor of *Koinônia*, Monthly Magazine
and organ of the Ek-Klesia.

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FIRST LECTURE COURSE

PRACTICAL MYSTICISM
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LECTURE I

THE CALL OF THE PATH

Now, without any further preamble, let me commence the subject that is before us, namely, "The Call of the Path." It is the first lecture of a series of five on the Path of the Divine Mysteries—*Mysticism*, plain and practical. I never use, or rarely use, the word "Mysticism," because it has been so distorted by all kinds of thinkers and teachers, and so much has been mixed up in the term "Mysticism," that I have learned by very sorrowful experience that it is not a very good word to use in these days. I am thankful to say, however, that it is more safely used in this country than it is in America, because everything that is "occult," everything that is psychic, everything that is "freakish"—I will not say that all these things are freakish—but everything that has a freakish nature about it is called "Mysticism," and a man is called a "mystic" who has no right to the title. I think I can safely use the word "mystic" here, though I rather dislike it. Therefore I will not discuss the word "Mysticism." I am discussing the subject of the Path of the Divine Mysteries; and what is the special Call to the Path? We are living in a day in which the Call to the Path is more exigent and vociferous than it has ever been in the past, to my knowledge and study of history. The Call of the Path in earlier days, in the days of the Apostles, and in the days of the Prophets, was a

very much more dangerous call, a more painful call, than it is at the present time, because those who preached the Call of the Path in those early days suffered often martyrdom and severe torture and other penalties for their audacity, for their temerity. It was the Call of the Path that was the message of the Great Master Himself. It was the Call of the Path, and the vast profound question that lies behind that Call, that is the source of it, the energy of it, and the motive of it, that was the message that our Lord Jesus Christ, our Great Master, and His successors, the Apostles, delivered to those who had the ear to hear, and they, every one of them, suffered the fatal consequences of delivering the message. That was the only possible reply, the only reply that has ever been given to that message from the earliest days, and humanity has suffered the consequences of many centuries of failure in delivering that message. The question arises in the mind to-day—Why is it that there is not persecution, not torture, not suffering, in these days following upon the delivery of the message, as compared with the days gone by, as compared with past history? Shall I give you the answer to that question? Perhaps if I do you will hiss me. No, I do not think you will be quite so rude as that, but you will shake your heads; or perhaps some of you will. But the Call of the Path has never been felt in any clear, emphatic and positive manner during all the centuries that have transpired since the Apostolic days; and yet the Call of the Path has been always existent. It has led many thousands of people, in every century of the present era—it has led them here and there in pursuit of something the nature of which they could not define, and has often brought them down to despair in the failure to discover what that Call was: to diagnose conditions by which to realise its purport and to fulfil its intention. It was so distant and so vague, it had so many tones, so many notes, so many forms of expression—or such lack of expression, as was more often the case—that very few, in past years, in past centuries, really recognised

that in what they were doing they were following the Call of the Path, and they slaved, and they endured, and they died, following the Call of the Path, not knowing what they were following, and never coming to a satisfactory conclusion of the following of it. In these days it is just the same. If it was not for the Call of the Path, if it was not for that inward, inarticulate voice uttering its painful cry beneath the dome of an unconscious mentality and deep spiritual darkness, there would not be any of these vagaries of religion which we have to-day.

The Call of the Path accentuates itself in all the different 'isms, and sects, and cults, and variations of religion, not only in Christendom, but in all parts of the world ; it voices itself in a thousand different hostile, mutually antagonistic, provocative conditions wherever you find it. What, for instance, is the main feature of the history of Christianity ? Provocation, jealousy, anger, persecution, quarrelling and warfare, in the most literal terms, as it is even to this day. Although now the state of Christianity is such that it is not fashionable to draw the sword in favour of particular religious views, yet there is a bitterer sword, a sharper sword, that cuts more deeply, and is more painful and prolonged, and that is, the sword of acrimony, the sword of the silent, but none the less forceful persecution that rages around the Truth—the Truth, no matter what small particle of it is recognised and accepted by individuals who follow it. It would be to me the greatest happiness to spare you my own language, and to read from a sheaf of correspondence that has come to me during the last twelve months only, from all parts of the world, of souls in despair—souls in despair, who have risen from their despair, because, at last, the ray of hope has shot into their darkness. The small but fine breath of Reality and of Truth has broken its way into unreality and untruth, which they have fought up against in a weary pilgrimage, when they reached, at last, the realisation of the Truth of the Path of the Divine Mysteries. What is it, for instance, that causes a man

living six thousand miles away from England, to suddenly make up his mind to break up his home, to sell up his business, to break away from his whole environment, in order to come and work and live in England that he might be in touch with the teaching, that he might hear the voice of the teacher, and be instructed in the steps of the Path of the Divine Mysteries? There is something in it when a man can do that, and it has been done repeatedly by men and women in different parts of the world, who have come from America, and other parts, to England,—and some are now coming, or making up their minds to come;—what for? I have nothing to give them. "Silver and gold have I none;" that is a literal fact. But they come. I have no home to provide for them, I have no remunerative labour to offer them; if they come they come on their own responsibility; if they come they come at their own risks; —but they come. And what is it that makes them come?

It is the Call of the Path. It is absolutely inexpressible; it is undefinable; it is something that speaks for itself. It is something that is unfortunately more often not realised until finally the time comes when something happens, some circumstance, or some great event in the life of the individual, that discovers to that individual that, all the time, in all the wandering and all the difficulty, in all the mysteries, the crises, the vicissitudes and the trials of the past, they were really going for the Path, they were really seeking it, not knowing what they were seeking. It reminds one of Abraham. Abraham was a very happy man, living with his parents and his people in the ancient city of Ur of the Chaldees, and then the Voice spoke to him that told him to go forth, and then you follow the circuitous route that Abraham took. Finally he left his father in Haran, and started on his lonely journey, not knowing whither he was going, but following a Voice; whether that Voice was audible does not matter. Probably it was the same kind of Voice you follow when you speak of following the Call of the Path. It is something that pushes you, it is some-

thing that drives you. It is something that pulls you, whether or not you want to go in the direction that it leads. The Voice has come to you, and turned your steps. There is not one member of the Ek-Klesia who will not confirm it by their own testimony of experience, that they have had to go through a similar journey, or they are still going through a similar journey, that Abraham went through from Ur of the Chaldees, until finally (fulfilling and completing the symbolism) Israel crossed the River Jordan, and entered the Promised Land, and the city of Jerusalem was built, and the temple was built; and that was symbolical of the final end of the Path of the Divine Mysteries. But we want to explain to you, we want to let you know something of what that Call really does intend—what its directions are. Our Great Master taught this Truth very explicitly—more explicitly than most people have apprehension to understand. Someone wrote to me the other day and said the trouble about the Path of the Divine Mysteries is that it is so simple that it is a difficult thing to understand, which is a paradox most people find when they come to look at it;—we wish to explain this Path to you, and the Great Master was more explicit in His Teaching than most of us suspect. For instance, when He enunciates the principle of the Faith, the principle of Salvation, the principle of Perfection, of Re-Generation, in the words: "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the path" (the Greek word (h)odon there means "path") "that leadeth unto life"; and then He sighed, and shook His head, and said, "few there be that find it." Why is it there are so few that find it? It was the same reason in the days of Jesus as exists today. The Hebrew religion was the orthodox religion, it was the church of the age, it was the church of the nation, it was the church of the people, to which Jesus Christ Himself belonged. He was a Jew, and the faith, the religion of Abraham and Moses, was the religion into which He was born. But the religion of the Jew, as it was exemplified and taught in those days, was not the religion of Moses,

and was not the religion of Abraham ; it was an adulterated, fossilised and degenerate religion. It had its root-foundation in the Law of Moses and in the Faith of Abraham, but it left out the principles for the rites and external practices. They became ultra-ritualists, ultra-formalists, ultra-moralists, and so forth, but the kernel of the truth, the grand teaching, the grand faith, the grand principle, the spirit and essence of Abraham and Moses, was extracted, and therefore the Jews, the priests, the Pharisees, and all the officials of the church, failed to recognise in the humble carpenter the Messiah whom they were positively expecting, and they rejected Him. They failed to recognise the Teaching of Jesus, but the Teaching of Jesus was no more nor less than the teaching of Abraham—" the faith," as Saint Paul puts it, " of Abraham." And so He came to call " the lost sheep of the House of Israel," and He began by teaching the Path, and He went all through His life teaching the same thing—the " Gate " and the " Path."

What do those two things signify ? First, the " Gate " signifies a beginning, a Divine start ; and secondly, the " Path " signifies progression, a process. Do we hear much about that to-day ? We hear about all kinds of starts, according to the different sects of Christianity that expound it. I am not going to say anything about those different kinds of starts. I have tried them mostly all, and I never got started. I tried " conversion," " instantaneous regeneration " ;—no, I never did try immersion, because why should I be " immersed " when I have been " sprinkled " upon in my babyhood ? Without going farther, I may say I have tried nearly everything. That was my path. That is where I have had to go to get to my path, and that is where some of us have had to go all our lives to get to the Path. Some of us have been orthodox, conventional church people. We have thought there is nothing like a nice little Prayer Book, put away in a nice little hand-bag, singing nice little hymns, and hearing nice little sermons, and thinking how nice and good we have been all the time.

There are heaps of people like that. I am not saying a word against them. Do not think because I say these things satirically sometimes, that I am a satirical individual. I am not. It is the principle of the thing that is so contemptible. People need to have their eyes opened. They are blindly seeking for the Path. They are always making starts. There is a great cry to-day in the religious world for "revival." They are all praying for revival, scheming for revival, and selling books and writing books about revival. You see it in every kind of magazine. It is in the churches. Revival, revival, revival; fresh start, fresh start, fresh start. That is what they are after all the time. They do not know better. Why? Because they do not know the Truth. They fail to realise what Jesus taught. The "Gate" has to be gone through, and consequently the "Path" has got to be traversed. But it is not through a lot of paths. Some people say you can each go your own way. John can go to Heaven his way, and Mary can go to Heaven her way. We can all go to Heaven different ways. That is very different from the statement of Jesus Christ. "Strait is the Gate, and narrow the Path," and the reason why so few find it is because they go all sorts of wrong ways, and they are going down this road, and that road, and all kinds of roads, and in the majority of cases there is not even a gate, because the road is so distinctly open to the wilderness, or the veldt, or the prairie, that they can go along without a gate. Now, in the Ek-Klesia—in our teaching of the Path of the Divine Mysteries—we expound the "Gate." We show it to you, but we do not open it to you. You cannot get through that Gate by any human opening; not because you have been dipped in water, or sprinkled with water, not because you have done this or that. Those are not the Keys to the Golden Gates. That is not the Key to the Gate which is the only opening to the Path that leads to the final goal. And yet I know a man who wrote to me a few weeks ago from Chicago, and he told me that he had started as an Episcopalian.

That is absolutely true. He started as an Episcopalian, was baptised in his infancy; then he joined the Baptists and was immersed; then he was not satisfied with that, and became a Roman Catholic, and then left the Roman Catholics and became a Christian Scientist, then a Spiritualist, and then he came to be a Theosophist. He had been all through the whole gamut, going through the different formulæ, the different forms, the different specimens of philosophy or religion as they were propounded and offered to him in these different ways. But he has just now gone through the Gate—the "strait gate"—and a pretty tough gate it has been for him.

Next Monday (*D.V.*) I am going to tell you what the "strait gate" is more particularly. But I am going to explain to you now another reason why so few there are who find it. It is not only because of the mixtures of different "ways" and the absence of any "gate" at all; it is not only for that reason that so few there are that find it. That is a good reason in itself, but there is another reason, and that is the *straitness* of the gate. The Great Master compared it, in one instance, to the "needle's eye." "It is easier for the camel to go through the needle's eye than for the rich man (the man with possessions) to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." And what the meaning is, is this:—they understood the allusion in those days as probably few understand it to-day. You know what the "needle's eye" really is. It is said to be a little postern gate in the wall that surrounded Jerusalem in those early days, and all the gates of the city were, by law, closed at sun-down, so that any caravan, or horseman, or traveller, arriving at the city gates after sun-down, would have to wait outside until sun-rise the next morning; but by special permission they were allowed to go through the "needle's eye," and the "needle's eye" was a very narrow strait, dark little postern, and the person who desired to go through and enter into the city after sun-down, had to go down on his hands and knees to get through at all. And

as for the camel, the only way the camel could get through was to have every bit of its harness and all the goods packed on that harness stripped from its back, and go on its knees and crawl through that postern, stripped of everything; and then, after they had crawled through the postern, they were free to roam and dwell for the night in the city of Jerusalem. Therefore, said Jesus Christ: "Strait is the gate." It is the "needle's eye," and it is exactly emblematic, as it was meant to be, of this "strait gate." Now, what is this "strait gate"? I ask the question, "What is this strait gate?" In the Ek-Klesia, in the teaching of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, we call it by a name. It is the Irrevocable Step of Self-Abnegation. And the meaning of "Self-Abnegation" itself needs to be explained. To understand all the meaning of Self-Abnegation will explain why so few people find this "strait gate." It does not mean "renunciation"; it does not mean that you are to take off your pearl necklace, and sell it to the jeweller, and give the money to Christ or God. It does not mean that you are to give up this habit, or that habit, or the other habit. They may be very excellent habits, or they may be very good things for you to give up, but it does not mean that we are to "renounce" *things*. It means the *negation of self*. Now what is negation? Negation is simply denying, and when you deny yourself you *deny your own existence*. The term "Self-Abnegation" means *self-non-existence*. I leave it at that. Its implications are stupendous. Work it out. Write it down—"self-non-existence"—on a piece of paper, and put it on your looking-glass before you go to bed, and say "Self-Abnegation is self-non-existence," and you will not sleep. You will have a bad night, because, if you are very sincere and very true, you will not be satisfied until you know what "self-non-existence" means, and you will work it out in your own mind. "Self-Abnegation," "self-non-existence," what does it mean? Work it out and try to find out what it does mean, and you *will* find out what it does mean. It does not mean self-suicide. It

does not mean that you are to put yourself out of existence in the physical sense of the word, but it means spiritually, symbolically, and in absolute reality of purpose and intention, that you put yourself out of existence, and that is proved by the experience of all those who have done it. Delicate and sensitive women, men of business in the world, all different types of people, have proved the meaning, and the intention, and the reality, of self-non-existence. But you must remember that to attain to self-non-existence is certainly not an immediate performance; you cannot do it; or, as they say in America, "It can't be did." You may say, "I am self-non-existent," you may affirm it with all the fervour of a "New-Thoughter." You may say, "I do not exist," but go out and see whether you do not exist. Go out without your umbrella, and it comes on heavily to rain, and you have on your new coat, and you will soon find that you made a mistake—that you were quite deluded—that you do exist. If you had no existence, that new coat of yours would have no existence, and the rain would have no existence. A dear brother, God bless him, came to me before the meeting and said, "I hope that your 'flu is over." He called it "'flu" because he did not know what else to call it. It was not the 'flu; it was something else. And he said to me, "If you pay me a visit I will make you immune from the 'flu;" but if I were to go to this brother and say, "Please make me immune from the 'flu," I should be countenancing its existence; but if I believe in self-non-existence, I do not care whether I have the 'flu or not; it is all the same to me. It is what Krishna taught. What did Krishna say to Arjuna just before the battle? Arjuna was terribly distressed because he had to kill his grandfather and his grandmother and all his ancestors and teachers, and he says, "Krishna, oh, I cannot do it," and so Krishna says to him in that wonderful lesson he gave in that particular chapter—I forget which, but I think it was the second—"When pleasure and pain, victory and defeat, gain and loss, are all the same to thee, then art thou prepared for battle."

Are pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, gain and loss all the same to thee? Have you got there yet? I know that you have not. It took me twenty-five years to get near there. It took brother Robert here I do not know how many years. He has only just got there. Why? Because the Path is the Path. It is progressive, it is a big, long, stiff, stern process—a process that means surgical operation, often in the most literal sense. That is what we call "the Step of Self-Abnegation." It really is the "cross." It is the cross in actual reality. It is not something you put on your breast, nor that you curtsey to when you pass it. It is not an ornament; it is far different from an ornament. It is something infinitely more profound, more awful, more terrible than any ornament. A dear sister who is taking the Step of Self-Abnegation—she has not yet taken it but she is going to; she is getting close up to it; she has got to what we used to call in our childhood days, "getting warm"; she has not found the gate yet, but she is going to enter it soon—this sister wrote to me that when she first followed the teaching it made her terribly frightened; she had the most appalling hours of visitations of fear, that they made her positively ill. Well, I do not think that she has quite the same amount of fear now, and do you know, after all, it is a good thing to have fear. Why does fear come? It is simply because of anticipating consequences. Have you ever yet seen or felt, or realised, a consequence that you have anticipated, that was in experience anything like fifty per cent. as bad as the anticipation of it? Fear is nearly always due to an overestimate of the anticipation of trouble.

Now, I will tell you why it is so—why the Path of the Divine Mysteries brings fear, and is bound to bring fear. You remember the words that Jesus Christ used: "Except a man hate his father, his mother, his wife, his children, and his possessions, for My sake and the Gospel's, he cannot be My disciple." Now, that is a state of self-non-existence, and when you come to think of it, it is a terrible business;

to have to get to that position that you would literally have to seem to hate the things that you love. Though that might never literally happen—though it might be that in taking that Step of Self-Abnegation such an awful thing ensues as hating your mother, or your father, or your wife, or your children, or your possessions, for the sake of Jesus Christ, and the Path of the Divine Mysteries—though that might not happen—nevertheless you have got to face it on the Path of the Divine Mysteries as something possible to happen. Nobody can possibly pass through this "strait gate" who has not faced the consequences; as Jesus Christ put it, "counted the cost." I would like to ask any reverend brother who may be here, or not—I would like to ask any real, true, devout, religious person to-night; in your experience have you ever had to "count the cost" in the literal sense that Jesus Christ put it? Has there been any necessity for the "cost" to be "counted" by your being a religious person? I know, when I was a Salvationist, about thirty years ago, I had to count the cost. I joined the Salvation Army because I thought it was the warmest, the most faithful red-hot thing on God's earth—that it was a true testimony to Jesus Christ. What cost did I have to face? Everything; brickbats, stones, red ochre, beer thrown at you, and all the ostracism and persecution that came the way of the Salvation Army in those early days. There was a bit of counting the cost; but I did not know the cost as I know it to-day. But to sit down and count the cost is necessary before you start on the Path. You have to go over the whole situation; you have got to envisage the future—the worst future that could possibly happen. What to? To the flesh. That is what you put out of existence. It is that self which you have only known in the past—the religious self, the business self, the worldly self, the social self, the material self, the external self—the only self that the majority of persons in this world have any acquaintance with. How can you have an acquaintance with a Self that is not *begotten*? Get that idea. And Re-

Generation does not begin at the beginning of the begetting; it begins only at the end of the begetting. What you are after by counting the cost and going through that "strait gate" of Self-Abnegation is this; you are going through that long, difficult and painful process of begetting, and getting rid of the self that you know, to discover the embryo of a Self that you never knew before. Getting rid of the false, material, selfish, carnal, earthly self that will die and perish, and finding buried beneath that sediment of the earth-self, a little tiny atom—nothing more than a tiny atom—and that is the seed of the Real Self. That has to go through all the processes of generation, of begetting within you, which we call Re-Generation. It has to be quickened; it has to develop, as it were, in the embryo. It has to go through all the processes of gestation, and finally it has to be born, and when it is born, it is only born a tiny little babe. Paul said that, when he spoke of "babes in Christ." Re-Generation is not a symbolical term. It is a real term, a scientific term, and it is meant, and intended to mean, a scientific occurrence and process.

Those words that are in Scripture have got to be taken literally. If we take the words of Scripture too spiritually, or "spiritualise" the words, we lose their meaning, and anyone can put a new construction on those terms; anyone can invent their own translation or interpretation of such terms. But when you take the real, literal, scientific intention of a word, you cannot get away from it, you cannot transpose it, and you cannot pervert it. There it is, "Re-Generation"; that is a process. Therefore the first Step of Self-Abnegation is the very first admission, what of? Not of Re-Generation. It is a preparatory course towards Re-Generation. Granted that Re-Generation itself is a process, but it is preceded by a long, tortuous, circuitous, painful, and sometimes terrible road of preparation, and that is the road that leads us through the "strait gate" and on the Path, because actually Re-Generation does not begin, in the literal, scientific sense of the word, until the disciple

has followed the Path for a very considerable length of time. It only begins when you get to the First Gate of the Divine Mysteries, and that is a long, long way to go after you have passed through the "strait gate." Therefore, I think that one of the reasons why there is this universal Call that very rarely finds an answer, a response in anything around, is because the cell, that little "seed" that is within you, that spiritual part of you—if I may use the term—is not satisfied with anything else than the Path of the Divine Mysteries, that is, the true spiritual "one thing needful" for the Divine microcosm, buried in the carnal and earthly shell; which is not satisfied with anything it knows is not genuine, the real thing; and the Spiritual entity that is within—though it is lifeless, inanimate, inert—is not satisfied. It is the shell that you have got to get rid of. Yet this "seed" within the shell is not without consciousness of its own, it is not without knowledge of its own, it is not without wisdom of its own, because the spiritual within you is of God, belongs to God, and is part of God—is eternally connected with, associated with, united with, God, and therefore what the Spirit within you knows, perceives, is conscious of, is what God Himself knows, perceives, and is conscious of. Therefore it stands to reason that, though that poor Spirit is buried beneath the rock of the earth-self, the dead-self—that Spirit is not a fool, it hates to go where the flesh takes it; it is dominated by the habits of the flesh, but it denies, rejects, it is hostile to everything that belongs to the flesh, to all the calls of the flesh, and the world, and those vast astral and dark influences that surround us in this world's environment; but it has not a say, it has not a chance to speak, and that is the Call of the Path. It utters itself in a thousand different ways. You may call it "conscience" if you like, or any other kind of a word. It is the dogged cussedness in people who will not prove by their own lives, who do not prove by their actions, who do not prove by their religion, who feel that at the back of all their successes, at the back of all the mysteries of life,

and incidental experiences of every day, that there is something that rejects the external, there is something that refuses the material; there is something that says "No, it is very good in its way, it is helpful, but it is not *it*." Someone wrote to me the other day and said, "Do you think in your Path of the Divine Mysteries (that is how she put it), do you think that Spiritualism and Theosophy and all these different things, are not by the way, and therefore can be accepted as helps along the way?" I wrote back and said, "I would rather put it in a different way. I would rather say that all these things you mention are neither "by the way," nor "on the way," but they are very much "in the way," and therefore the only way to the goal is the Path, no matter how strait the gate is, no matter how narrow the Path is. But believe me, you can never get on the Path, no matter how strait the gate is, no matter how narrow the Path is—you can never get on the Path until you have gone through the gate, and you can never get to the gate until you know something about what it is to get through the gate.

I will not ask you to go through the gate to-night. I would not encourage you to think of it. You have to know me a great deal better, and you have to go a long way in your own knowledge of yourself, before you are competent to go through the gate. I said at the beginning that I cannot open the gate for you. You cannot open it for yourself, and all the Ek-Klesia at the back of me, in front of me, and around me—the whole force of the brotherhood—cannot open that gate for you, and you cannot open that gate for yourself. Paul and Peter cannot open it for you, and all the angels of Heaven cannot open it for you, and all the truths that some people think so much of cannot open it for you. They cannot help you. No one can open it for you except the one and only One, Who is "the Way." Why, if you would only believe your Scriptures, if you would only take note of what the Great Master has so distinctly and emphatically said, you would know. He said, "I am

the Path "—the Path—(h)odon—" and the Truth, and the Life; nobody can come unto the Father but by Me." Therefore what does it amount to? It amounts to the dear old words that we have sung, and preached, and listened to from every kind of platform and every kind of pulpit, from the highest of the high to the lowest of the low—the same old text that is on everyone's lips and every teacher's tongue, and it is this—the old text that your minister used to preach to you about, the old text my father used to preach about a great deal in his pulpit, the old text that my brother the minister down there knows very well—I guess he has many sermons stowed away on the same old text: what is the text?

" Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." I wish I had time to tell you to-night what that means, but I am going to give you two points. The first is on the word " believe." Now if you knew Greek—I do not profess to know it very well myself—you would know that when the verb is in the present tense it is a continuous verb. When it says " believe " in the tense it is used here, in the present tense, that means believe, and go on believing, and believe on, and believe on, and the time shall come when you " shall be saved,"—progress, progress. That is the Path. The Path is all the time " believing on the Lord Jesus Christ," all the time putting your trust in the Great Master, all the time believing in His Words, obeying His Words, loving His Words, and the Words that the Great Master puts on the lips of His disciples and teachers to present to you. Therefore, I say, in conclusion—forgive the ruggedness of my language, and the stupidity of my method of speech—but go home with this one message to-night: " What is the Path? " It is the Call of the Christ in you, in response to the Call of the Great Master in Heaven, by the Spirit that environs you on this earth, to " Come unto Me all ye that travail." That is a hard word—" travail." Some of you think it means tiredness. It means " travailing in birth "—pregnancy. Any mother

will tell you that is not an easy thing to go through. "Come unto Me all ye that travail, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." But the "rest" does not come until the "travail" is over. Progress again. Therefore I say to you once more, believe, and go on believing, until you have found. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

LECTURE II

THE STEP OF SELF-ABNEGATION

SOMEBODY once told me in New York, about ten years ago, that when she was first following the Path—first striving after, groping to know more about it—she never used to come to the Class in Broadway without, after the Class, having almost to go on her hands and knees to get down the stairs or into the lift, and when she got to the street she had to lean up against the lamp-post outside, because of the awful shock and painful revelation that the Lesson had been to her. But she was one of those very determined persons, who knew by very strong conviction that the truth that was being delivered, however distasteful and unpleasant and uncomfortable, was the truth that God was speaking to her, and so she persevered, and though I had four or five Classes every week, she never missed one. Often she was the only one who was there, and one day she said: "Oh, Mr Sampson, won't you defer this Lesson, because I am the only one?" "No," I said, "the message I have to-night is for you because you are here, and it shall be given just in the same spirit of fulness as I could possibly give it if the room was crowded with people." That lady has been following the Path, and she has passed through all the stages of progression and graduation, and she is now working with me, taking care of the affairs of the Ek-Klesia in Birmingham, having followed me from California to England, and I hope she will be here before this Course of Lectures is over. Now, why I say that is this: The message that I am sure will come from my lips to-night will be a very

drastic message to you, or to most of you. It may possibly be a message you least expected to hear, and it is quite possible that you have not come to-night with the receptive and truly humble spirit of a seeker, or a disciple, or a learner, but just as a curious person anxious to get to know the latest of freakish presentations of quasi-truth. If so, you will probably go away very much annoyed and offended.

The subject is "The Step of Self-Abnegation." I dwelt a little upon it last Tuesday—prepared the way, prefaced what I was going to say to-night. And it was not for the perfect and absolute consciousness, born of years of discipline and endurance, I would not have the courage to say it. There is nobody who is more tender-hearted than I am, and when I have to thrust the spear plank into your vitals, it is not a pleasant task for me to do, and I know it is not a pleasant thing for you to suffer. I have used the term, the "Irrevocable Step of Self-Abnegation," and I wish to press that adjective upon you—"irrevocable." "No man," says the Great Master, "having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit (or meet) to be My disciple." I am not going to quote Scripture to you more than just one or two little texts perhaps, but I am going to recommend to you, as applicable to this phrase or message of the Great Master, the 6th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews—a chapter that I have very rarely heard any person preach upon, and I do not think I ever, when I was officially working in the church, had the courage to preach on it myself. But I commend that chapter to your attention and study—right from the beginning to the end. Now that word "irrevocable" drew from me what I have just said, because I wish to remind you that the first step is irrevocable. It is morally irrevocable; it is spiritually irrevocable, and if the disciple breaks away from it, there is an end to that disciple as regards his ultimate discipleship. It is a terrible thing to say, but it is true. That is why I said last Tuesday that I am not going to ask anyone of you to take that Step. It is not for me to do so.

There is only one Voice that can ever utter the Call to enter the Strait Gate of this wondrous Path, and that is, God, through Jesus Christ, His One Medium of Truth and the Word to human souls. I use the word " medium " I think a little advisedly, because that is exactly the word. " Mediator " means " Medium," intermediary, and, therefore, what need have we of any other kind of mediums when we have the " One Medium " who has the power, through the Spirit, to reflect the Mind of God upon human consciousness in absolute perfection of understanding ? Not the Mind of God in its fullest extent and its ample plenitude in one message, in one word ; but it is the reflection of the Mind of God, that comes to you by the Will of God through the Great Master into your spiritual consciousness according to His design and His realisation of what it is you need to be taught from Him at any particular stage of growth. Some people say that when an Initiate has attained to the Seventh Golden Gate of the Divine Mysteries, and becomes what is technically called a " Master," that he is a walking encyclopedia of Divine Truth, Divine understanding, and Divine knowledge. He is nothing of the sort. A tap that you get your water from does not contain, in itself, the reservoir from which it is derived, but it is in connection with the reservoir, and if you turn that tap on, and keep it flowing for an interminable time, you would empty the reservoir, if it was conceivable. Do you get the meaning of what I am saying ? He gives His Truth to us according to our capacity, according to our necessity, according to the desirability for ourselves in the particular circumstances and conditions of the moment, and at the particular " age " to which we have arrived in the Path. " Measure " by " measure," we are attaining " unto the stature of the full age of Christ." So that when we are at the fountain-head, we can draw, and draw, and draw the Knowledge of God from the Divine Logos, according to the Will of the Logos Himself, Who knows us better than we know ourselves. But if we can draw from that source, all other taps and

sources and cisterns are "broken cisterns." Of these other sources, how can we be sure? We cannot be sure. We never are sure whether we are drawing right or wrong, except we draw from God, through the "One Medium," and every human "medium," or "spirit," is but the reflection of some kind of thought, distilled, coloured and tinged by passing preconceptions of his own past; from an hereditary consciousness, which, of course, filtrates into the "message" which he gets, so that it cannot be certain whether it is the true message or not. That is why in the Path of the Divine Mysteries we never have that difficulty. It does not come to us in words; it does not come to us in syllables; it does not come to us in books; it does not come to us in audible voices; it does not come to us in "automatic writing" or "trance utterances"; but it comes to us in a state of unconsciousness, and we soon get a consciousness of it as it affects the life of *action*, and therefore we live all the time the Life of Faith. It is not "walking by sight"; it is "walking by Faith," so that it means a condition of absolute unconcern for results of actions. We do not steadfastly and deliberately, as it were—to use a phrase we sometimes hear—"go into the silence." I have seen lots of people "go into the silence," but I never could "go into the silence." There is no more tedious or ineffectual thing for me than to keep my eyes shut. I should go to sleep. We do not do it by "going into the silence." We do not go on to our knees and pray. We do not sit in a chair and say, "I am going to wait for the Great Master to deliver a message"—searching for tokens and signs.

Let me tell you the time when we get most of the Divine Logos imparted to us. It is in the state of utter unconsciousness of deep sleep. Scripture says, "He giveth to His beloved when in sleep," and, after wakening, one does not go and say, "I have had a wonderful time," and commence talking about it to everyone. We do not have those experiences, and if we do, they are of no value to us; they are of no use. In fact we put them away at once, because

we know that that kind of demonstration is merely phenomenal, demoniacal, astral. But we do know when we have had some Divine Mystical experience coming to us in unconsciousness, in the sleeping hours, and we do not ask what it was, for it always manifests itself later in some circumstance or action. It often manifests itself in a tremendous test, and the test comes with such a Divine and unconscious visitation that gives us the strength and power, and the preparation, for passing through that test unscathed by disobedience, unbelief, or any kind of human folly. So the fruition of the Step of Self-Abnegation is just what I have described in a few brief words. That is the fruition of it.

Well, if that is the case, after taking the Step of Self-Abnegation we start to live the Life of Faith in the most literal and perfect sense of the word, in the scientific, material, and philosophic sense, as well as in its Spiritual sense. It is so easy to talk of living by Faith, but when we do it deliberately, for life, regardless of life and consequences, without concern for actions, we commit or perform every action, or every inaction, that comes to our lot, by Faith. It is all the same to us; we are in the Path of the Divine Mysteries. The most momentous moments of my own chequered and changing career have been in the instantaneity of an action, without premeditation. I came 6000 miles to England on the spur of the moment. I took my little suit-bag, with a few little things, and just enough money to see me on the shore, without a penny piece when I got to Liverpool. "On the spur of the moment." Why? Because the message came so distinctly to me—not in an audible voice, or a mysterious manifestation; no "angel" or "spirit" came to tell me to do it. But the message came as clear as a bell—"You have to go to England for Brother So-and-so's sake," and I crossed that 6000 miles for one man's sake, and that man is here, and it is only recently we have come to the culmination of the purpose for which I travelled all that distance. About nine years ago the same

thing happened to me. I went to America—I started in a moment of time. I did not premeditate; I went straight and got my ticket. How the money came to get the ticket is a miracle, but it did come. I landed in New York. For two or three years I struggled in New York, with no friends. Nobody knew me, and it was only after about seven years at the least that I found out what I had come to New York for. All that distance, all that suffering I went through there. Why did I do it? I did not premeditate it. I had not the slightest conception of what I went for. It was the last country in the world I had any desire to go to, because I always had a prejudice against America; but I got there, and I brought back what I got there. I brought back the whole performance of those seven years—one woman; the woman I was talking about just now, who is my devoted helper and my principal colleague in all the work I am doing. Of course others followed me afterwards from America—half a dozen or so—and there are more to follow; but that is what I really went for. That is the way we work on the Path of the Divine Mysteries. That is a perfect demonstration of what it means by *Self-Non-Existence*, which, as I told you on Tuesday, is the precise, literal meaning of the word "Self-Abnegation." I had a dear old friend in America many years ago—he was a good old soul, an old Scotch Druid—it was he who published *The Life & Discourses of the Lord Jesus Christ*. We got into a long correspondence. He was a very deeply taught soul. He knew I had passed through certain curious experiences, that I had literally lived in "caves" and gone through the process of the "Ascetic," and he thought that it was absolutely necessary that everyone should go through the same process, and he said, "I am going to live in the caves of the mountains of Georgia." He was 80 years of age. He climbed up the mountain, and lived there for five days, and he came down more dead than alive. It is a wonder he did not die as a consequence of that terrific exposure. I said to him, "You made a great mistake. You did what

you ought not to have done. If you were doing what you ought to have been doing, you would not have made up your mind to do it in imitation of me; the Master would have forced you into it by circumstances." You see I got into the wilderness through taking the First Step of Self-Abnegation. I did not want to do it. Nobody hates exposure, and cold weather, and wet, and snakes and cold winds more than I do. Nobody dislikes walking more than I do, but I walked those thirty miles out from Pietermaritzburg, and stopped there from six to eight weeks. Why did I do it? I will give you the explanation. Because I had not any money; because the Great Master had dragged me down to absolute poverty and destitution. Everything had gone to pieces with me. My wife and my children had gone to England. My former friends forsook me. My position as a minister went away from me, and I had nothing to live upon. I only had a suit of ragged clothes and a shirt—just enough to cover me. I went to stay with people at Pietermaritzburg (who, by the way, were Spiritualists); they gave me hospitality. They wanted to take me with them when they removed to Greytown, but I said "No," and I went one night, and said to the Great Master, "Now, Master, where am I to go?" and He said "Go where I lead you." The next morning I left a little note to say "Thank you," and I slipped out. All I carried was a brown paper parcel containing a lot of manuscript, afterwards published as *The Life and Discourses of the Lord Jesus Christ.* I tramped the thirty miles, waiting for a cue to know where I was to go. Then I saw a small mountain covered with huge rocks and boulders, and I felt a voice—I did not hear it—I felt a voice say, "Go up that mountain," and I did. I went up the mountain and found a beautiful rock shelving out, and I said, "This is my cave." I did not know anything about "caves" in those days—that is, on a mystical basis. I stayed there for six or probably eight weeks, and only once or twice during this period did I come down to get a little milk or bread and cheese from some-

body I had a slight acquaintance with in Pietermaritzburg. I was "driven by the Spirit into the wilderness." You wait. You are not going to push yourself by deliberate performance into foolishness, into fanatical nonsense, like so many people do. We live by circumstances, and if the circumstances are such that, in the course of Divine Providence and leading, your money is taken from you, and you have to suffer the same things that I have had to go through—well, that is what I have done, but you are not going to force it on yourself.

Self-Abnegation does not mean giving up things. It means *denying the existence of yourself.* If you deny the existence of yourself, you do not exist. Do you understand that? Take it into your consideration. Then if you do not exist, nothing exists that belongs to you. If you do not exist, nothing exists around you. If you do not exist, the snake does not exist, and it cannot bite you. If you do not exist, the money that you want or do not want does not exist. If you do not exist, nothing "happens" to you. Nothing exists. My riches, possessions, mother, father, wife, have no existence, because I have no existence. They are there; absolutely there. In most literal fact we have children, father, wife, mother, neighbours, and business and cold weather, and poverty, and riches. They are there absolutely in material existence around you, but you have no existence to them; they are nothing to you; they have dropped from you. Every one of them has dropped from you in the sense that they drop from you as clinging to you. As iron filings cling to a magnet, you will be demagnetised from all matter, all objects, demagnetised from all astral and earthly environment, as you live in the Path. There is another paradox. You will never know you have ever existed in your whole life until you get to the stage of self-non-existence. You will find out such wonderful things about yourself that you never dreamed of.

But the trouble is, in learning the things about yourself you never dreamed of, you have first to get rid of the self

you have been dreaming about all the time—the self that has been your only method of existence; the clay body that you only know. And then we have come to a knowledge of the necessity for Re-Generation to attain to the fixed state of self-non-existence. We begin to realise and accept the Truth by faith—of that great, real, immortal, spiritual, undiscernible, inexpressible Selfhood that lies hidden and buried beneath the shell of matter. What do we find about that to our great gratification? I will tell you what will be a discovery to you. In the first place you will find that the Self *is*, but it does not *exist*. "Existence" is "ex-being," *out of* being, and therefore you only start to "exist" on this planet when you have been *born*. But you *were* before you were born. Even if you do not believe in the doctrine of pre-existence (which I do), yet you did pre-exist. You pre-existed as an embryo in your mother's womb. And before you pre-existed in the mother's womb, you pre-existed in the loins of your father, and we have pre-existed in a great many ancestor's loins before we came to exist in our present terrestrial career. That is a valuable thing to discover; that I did not exist before birth as an individuate personality, and existence—only as an embryo—nothing but a speck, an atom, a tiny atom, a little bit of "seed," which "*is*," inanimate in every shell-body, that body which is the only part of the personality I have ever visualised and experienced throughout my earthly course.

The first discovery you make when you enter, by faith, into the state of Self-Abnegation, is that you are literally, absolutely non-existent; because you cannot say an unborn child exists. It only begins to "exist" when it is born. Still there is the inert, inanimate speck of life that is in you—that "*is*." That is all you can say about it—it "*is*." What happens to that speck of life? When you begin to live the Life of Faith, and put your Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—what happens then? There is an opening made; there are fissures or apertures made in

that rock of self. It comes through the hearing of the ear; it comes through the seeing of the eye; it comes through the mysterious consciousness of reality and truth you have only been able to catch but vaguely—as if floating in the air around—imparted to you by the Logos, through the Apostle's teaching, and the Spirit of God enters. Not your spirit, but the "Holy Ghost," as it is generally called, because there is a distinction between the spirit of man, and the Divine Essence, the Divine Aura, the Divine Magnetism. The Divine Spirit, "Holy Ghost," what is it? It comes in, it percolates through the tissues of your organic body, and touches the "seed," that little spark of Divine within you, and quickens it, and that is what we call "conception." And after "conception" takes place, a long, long time follows between "conception" and "begetting," in the processes of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, which is the most difficult for all disciples—that period of "pregnancy" in the Spiritual life, in the growing consciousness of the soul struggling along that tortuous, spiral path that leads to the Gates of the Kingdom of Heaven. I hope now—even though I have spoken somewhat vaguely, because we are treading on very holy ground, and it seems to me almost as if it were profanity even to touch upon such a sacred subject as this in a public audience—I hope you have learned this lesson; what the Step of Self-Abnegation means in its intrinsic sense.

Now let me answer the question as to what it means in its practical sense. How am I going to take the Step of Self-Abnegation? Some people write to me under the impression that, because they have committed a certain act of faith, they have taken the Step of Self-Abnegation. A dear Sister wrote to me, "I know now that I have taken the Step of Self-Abnegation." She wrote it with great enthusiasm. Well, she had not taken the Step of Self-Abnegation. She had only accepted the Step as an object to aim at. She had only recognised the Sacred Principles that that Step involves. She had only accepted the ex-

actions upon her life in the flesh that come upon every disciple who makes up his mind to follow the Path. Do you think that God would be justified, and do you think that any reasonable, plain, common, intelligent teacher would be justified in telling you that you had taken the Step of Self-Abnegation, because you had, for the first time, come to understand what it means? Of course not. It would be a most dangerous thing for you to do. And you cannot do it; that is the best of it. You cannot take the Step by your own voluntary choice. It has to be taken for you. What is the Step then? It is just this. The inner "being" of yours is quickened to consciousness of life and understanding within you, that indicates and registers this consciousness of life and understanding upon the human brain, and makes you without any consciousness on your part, without any choosing on your part—makes you take the Step of Self-Abnegation. It is God's work. It is the Divine work in you. It is the quickened Spirit that works in you. And how does that happen? Because "the flesh" it says, "lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and you cannot do the things that you would." It is absolutely true, you "cannot." But then I know that the flesh lusts against the spirit all the time, but because the flesh lusts against the spirit it does not mean to say that the flesh is going to *dominate* the spirit. No, it is a tug-of-war, but when the Spirit is in possession of you, to instruct and enlighten you to the limit and measure of your capacity to receive it, it takes possession, and you have no self-existence of your own. The only existence you acknowledge now is the existence of the Christ-Self in you.

But your flesh is in you all the time; it is something apart from you, but annexed to you; that which the Great Master Himself has annexed for Himself, and He seizes you, He gets possession of your organs, your senses, your passions, your appetites, and your tastes, and "makes you perfect in every good work, working in you that which is

well-pleasing in His sight." He takes possession of you; and the child—the smallest, gentlest, most innocent child—can start to walk more healthfully, more happily, more unstumblingly upon the Path of the Divine Mysteries, under the tuition and illumination of the Spirit of Christ within him, than the man who knows a lot—the Professor of Divinity, the Psychological student, and all kinds of people who think, because they know a lot of other things, they are qualified to stand on a platform and teach other people. It is so difficult to unlearn "learned" people. It is so difficult to make a "little child" of the person who has some parts and attainments. A dear Sister wrote to me a little time ago. The discovery to her came in a flash; it came to her in a moment, and said, "that is the strait gate." She had just discovered for the first time in her life that she had got back again into the state of being a little "babe in Christ." And a little babe is not very well able to look after itself; it has to go from babyhood to adolescence, and from adolescence to maturity, and from maturity to the grand old age of a fine healthful creature.

This is there where the trouble comes in. The great darkness that sometimes overwraps the devotee on the Path of the Divine Mysteries is the dealing with the flesh body, the earth body, the shell, the piece of skin, the "coat of skin" that covered Man after the Fall, the skin of matter that Man got wrapped up in. The thing that, as I have said before, is the only thing you are objectively conscious of in this world at all; the thing that contains your idiosyncrasies, your characteristics; the thing that expresses your feelings, your passions, your desires, your emotions, your aspirations, your musical taste and artistic sense, your literary faculties, and all the wonderful mysterious qualities that you have developed—they belong to the flesh, they belong to the earth only. You may be a clever person, but the cleverer you are the more deluded you are in regard to the Sacred Principles I am trying to express to you. And I can tell you that all those who have followed the Path

of the Divine Mysteries have had to go through that little postern gate, that little "needle's eye." The first thing they had to do was to say, "*I do not exist.*" Then my knowledge does not exist, my science does not exist, my art does not exist, my house does not exist, and my jewels do not exist. They do all the time, but *you* do not exist. Therefore those jewels are yours, so long as the Great Master lets you have them. He is not going to say, "Hand over those jewels." He does not ask you to desert your wife, or to starve your children, and go and preach in the streets, or live a life of solitariness. He does not ask for "asceticism"; but I will tell you what He does for you. He removes all possession of yourself. He takes away from you the consciousness that you belong to yourself. He does more than that, He takes from you the consciousness that there is any self that can belong to you.

Therefore, if the Great Master, having accepted you as His disciple, and you humbly and happily accept His Call to follow the Path—if the Master says to that woman that she is to sell her house and go homeless—well, she would do it as happily, as freely, as if I was to tell her I was going to give her a palace. If He was to tell that man he was to give up his profession, he was no longer to be a doctor, or a dentist, or a music teacher, or a preacher; that he was to give up that house he has lived in, and all his books and musical instruments and everything else—his idols—if he was to tell him to sell all these things; turn them all down, and live in the gutter, he would do it, and he would be happy to do it; he would do it with a smiling face. If the Great Master told our Brother here he was to stand on the curb of the Stock Exchange to-morrow morning to preach the Truth out there amongst the Stockbrokers, though they might take him into the Stock Exchange and make a fool of him (I have heard they do that sort of thing on the Stock Exchange), he would throw his hat up in the air, and say, "Thank God; Christ for me." But the Great Master does not do those sort of things. If you are going to make a

fanatical fool of yourself for Christ's sake it will be the Christ in you that does it, and none of your foolish self-simulations that will do it. The point I am trying to get at is this; that if you have taken the Step of Self-Abnegation, everything is all the same to you—crucifixion, mortification, humiliation, persecution, losses, sickness, or their opposites,—I say sickness, because I am not here to propound any theory that it is not right that some people should be sick—there is only one kind of treatment God has made to administer to some kinds of people, and that is to make them sick—that is, that in the Path of the Divine Mysteries, "healing" is neither a "profession" nor a "practice." There are no "opposites," of sickness or health, poverty or wealth, pain or happiness, on the Path. How can there be when they are all merged together? One is the same as the other, therefore there are no opposites. You accept this part of what we call "counting the cost." You have got to count the cost, because you are not fit to take the Step of Self-Abnegation until you have reached the stage of accepting all that the Step involves; until you welcome everything God sends to you, until you can say, "I will trust any circumstance God takes me to, and I will accept everything that comes to my lot, without question or demur. I will be glad if I "suffer the loss of all things if I may gain Christ." So that you may be "poor, yet possessing all things."

If you read the Apostle Paul's teaching in the Epistles to the Romans, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Thessalonians—if you read them in this light, you will see that Paul knew a great deal more than people think he knew, and that there is an interpretation of his words that does not appear in theological commentaries, nor is sounded in the pulpits of modern preachers. All these things are straightened out at once when we are on the foundation truth of the Christ-Within. And that is what, in the beginning of the Life of Faith, takes place. It is the "conception," the quickening within you, of the life of that

inanimate, inert, lifeless thing, the Spirit that is in you. And then you go through this process of "pregnancy," and that is the time we start really to practise the Truth before we have got it in actual fact. We practise the Truth of Self-Abnegation *in anticipation*, before we come to the point of the Step of Self-Abnegation. We go all around ourselves and around ourselves; because how can we get rid of a self we do not know anything about? So, on the Path of the Divine Mysteries there are always the "*Lesser Mysteries*" before the "*Greater Mysteries*," and the "*Lesser Mysteries*" are those points of contact with ourselves that bring self-revelation, self-disillusionment, self-contempt, self-disgust, when we discover the depths, the stratifications, the layers of badness, of wrong earth habits, of habits the majority of which at the present time are below the surface of our lives, perfectly unconscious. We bring up to our spiritual memory all those vast accretions of wrong, and error, and mistake, and falsehood, and foolishness that we have committed, not merely in this lifetime, because those are only trifling compared with the vast accumulations that have fallen upon us, and the twistings and turnings and the deepnesses of our own earth capacities, brought upon us in the ages of the past; because we have lived so many ages ago, working ourselves up from ignorance to wisdom and understanding and knowledge, from the primeval unconscious condition of our original fallen state, to that of graduating Divine Self-Consciousness. And all these ages we have been going through it, and through it, and through it, and whilst we have accumulated and developed within us rising and increasing degrees of understanding and capacity for the good, we also have been accumulating within us the bad qualities, the wrong habits—the habits of wrong action, and of wrong thought, and the multitude of earth habits that have befallen us in our unconscious correspondence to the environment of evil, that could only be causative of bad habits; so that whilst we have been growing worse in some senses, we have been growing better

in other senses. We have been growing into a state of greater power and capacity to know and understand, developing greater faculties of intelligence and knowledge at the same time. Corresponding with that greater capacity and greater faculty, there has also been the greater faculty and capacity to correspond with equal degrees of increase in the knowledge of, and conformity to, the evil that is our environment.

Therefore you see that this state of "pregnancy," the beginning referred to as the "*Lesser Mysteries*," is one of terrible self-exposure. You do not like to be told the truth, do you? You do not like to be told what a mean, contemptible, superficial person you have always been. You do not like to be shown that those supposed sweet and lovely traits in your character are only the passing aroma that springs from roots of evil and wrong, and that, after all, it is the flesh that has been operating, and not the spirit. And therefore, if you have "given all your goods to feed the poor," and used your tongue as with golden eloquence to deliver messages of wisdom and understanding and knowledge, and written books, and poetry, and made yourself wonderfully artistic and accomplished in all the various arts—after you have done all this you can "remove mountains." But you have not got that wonderful Fire-Spirit which is mystically called "Love"—an ambiguous word to use in this connection, because everyone thinks you are talking about "love" in the flesh. It is the "quickening," before the future "birth," of that Divine Ego that needed to come forth into "existence" from its state of unconscious "being" within you.

The difficulty, therefore, is—don't you see?—to accept the truth; to be told that you are as bad as you are. And the moment you try to protect yourself, to defend yourself from your own self-accusations, or resent it, that moment you prove that you are not anywhere at all on the Path, because you cannot defend a thing that does not exist, and therefore it proves that you still exist. As I said the other

day, if you are self-non-existent, and you go out without an umbrella, and the rain spoils your best hat, and you got peeved about it, it shows that you exist, as well as the hat, and the rain. But when you are on the Path and have attained to the state of self-non-existence, it does not matter if to-morrow morning you get a telegram to say that every bawbee in the bank has gone, you would not shed a tear, you would not turn a hair. You would say, "Thank God, that is gone, and the Great Master can take care of me." That is the way we live when we truly start on the Path of the Divine Mysteries. I do not want to paint the rose. I do not want to hammer the nail in too far to-night; and I know what some of you are eager to know—How am I to take that Step? I leave you with that question in your minds, and next Monday the subject will be on that very topic—what we call "*The Five Valours of the Disciple.*" And it will be just an illumination to you what those Five Valours are—of the simple process and the simple method by which the humblest disciple, as well as the profoundest student, all have to go through the same rule, and fulfil the same practice of the Step of Self-Abnegation, and practise it, and practise it, and go on doing it, until finally you have so practised the habits of the Christ in you that you have practised away from you the earth habits of the human in you, that you have none left. And when you have so practised the habits of the Christ in you, in substitution for the old earth habits you have been destroying, then the time is come when the Great Master will say, "Here is the Gate, go right through"; and you go through, because you have stripped yourself of everything that would stop you from going through; and therefore the preliminary work of the "*Lesser Mysteries*" has been performed, and you will go along steadily, happily, all the time. You have only begun to know what the Path means; but you will progress along and along, until, at last, you find yourself knocking at the First of the Seven Golden Gates. In a future Lecture we shall have a definition of the Seven Golden Gates.

LECTURE III

THE FIVE VALOURS OF A DISCIPLE

THOSE who are not sophisticated in the teaching of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, will probably regard as slightly enigmatical the term "*The Five Valours of a Disciple.*" The question was put to me some while ago, "What authority in Holy Scripture have you for the Five Valours of the Disciple?" My reply was, that if you take your Cruden's Concordance, and select all the passages in the Old and New Testaments—in the Bible—that contain the words embraced under the term "The Five Valours of a Disciple," you will have such a collection of texts that will last you a lifetime for your own support and your own understanding. Now the Five Valours of a Disciple are, *Faith*, *Obedience*, *Love*, *Devotion* and *Fortitude*. It must be apparent to every student of this teaching that its arduousness, its strenuous character, its marvellous testing properties, make it evidently necessary that the Path cannot be taken, nor pursued, without the use and practice of the Five Valours of the Disciple. In fact no one can take a step on the Path without them. But this is susceptible of an explanation which might modify the meaning of what I say. It is one thing to be *on* the Path; it is another thing to be *making towards* the Path, and you never can fully realise the necessity of the Five Valours whilst you are making towards the Path; but you cannot help realising their value and necessity when you are on the Path. Why this distinction between being *on* the Path, and *making for* the Path? I will

guarantee that that distinction is represented by everyone of us, on one side or the other—everyone of those present in this room. There are some here—many—the majority —are *making for* the Path, and there are some here who are *on* the Path. Those who are making for the Path have been making for the Path very much longer even than they imagine they have been doing it. Very few people living in these modern days have the slightest suspicion, the slightest conception of their immense age, their tremendous antiquity; that they have been unconsciously following after the Path in the ages past, from the beginning of what is called "time," to the present day. And what has made the seeking of the Path more complicated has been the progress that the human race has made during these successive ages of past temporal history. Whilst, on the other hand, there has been an equal complication through the fact that though there has been evolutionary growth in consciousness and mentality, yet there has also been evolutionary growth in the obstacles to the conformity of that consciousness to the good, and a wider, greater, stronger force of attraction and conformity to evil, as the world has increased in intellectual knowledge and understanding. But there has been this constant, incessant, persistent struggle of numbers—thousands, tens of thousands of generations of people, after the Path, but it has been a blind and ignorant struggle, in the majority of cases of those who have survived, and live at the present time. But I want to remind you of one very momentous fact: that there was 100 per cent. more knowledge of the Path before Christ than there is to-day, and than there was at the immediate Advent of our Great Master, nearly two thousand years ago. In the Old Testament we know that there was an innumerable crowd or following of people, generation after generation, who were "in the Faith"; who lived in the Faith. There is no testamentary record of these lives other than scraps and fragments of references to individuals, like the prophets and the ancient patriarchs, whose names are

handed down to us in the Scripture records. There is no other record, with respect to their valour, to describe the history, the sufferings, the wretchedness, and the wanderings of these people, in the mass, who lived in the Faith of the Path. But we have one precious testimony to that in the Epistle to the Hebrews. I contend that St Paul was the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Many people in these modern days of criticism and science say that St Paul was not the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. I say he was ; but what does it matter who the author was ?—the book is all right. But in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the 11th chapter, there is a very remarkable passage, or writing, and it closes with these words : " *These all died in the Faith, not receiving the Promise.*" Now, in Apostolical terms, " the Promise " means the fulfilment of that which was contained in " the Faith," and is the text, the theme, of the preaching and the teaching of the Patriarchs, the Prophets and the Apostles, and of the Great Master Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. It was the explanatory form giving explicit teaching of the symbolisms which illustrated to the saints of the Old Testament the same Truth, the same Wisdom, in its fullest and its widest application, and its most detailed expression of " the Faith "—the Faith that Jesus, in the fulness of time, came to fulfil, and to hand down to the ages that followed, until the time when that Faith and the Promise contained in that Faith, will receive their ultimate plenary fulfilment. They lived and " died in the Faith, *not* receiving the Promise."

Have you ever considered what an extraordinary statement that is ? Have you ever considered that *Re-Generation was not possible in the Old Testament times ?* That it was only promissory ? That the Divine Mysteries were still apart, away from the possession of those ancient saints who *believed* in the Divine Mysteries ? Can you realise, by a stretch of imagination, yourself living in these dark days, as they were called, under the brutal and bestial ignorance of Israel and the Gentile nations of those periods ? What

an heroic life it must have been to have lived "in the Faith"! And as we read in that wonderful chapter of the 11th of Hebrews, they "*died in the Faith*"—not dying in their beds, but they died in their boots—in their sandals, I suppose. They died brutal, cruel, vile deaths, and you read descriptions of those deaths in Hebrews xi., the detailed statements of which are not extant in our present documentary records, though they evidently had existed, from which the Apostle drew his testimony. Why was it then that these people had the courage of their convictions to "live in the Faith," to testify to the "Faith" and to "die in the Faith"; that "Faith" which very few people in this world would have the courage to-day to hold a finger up in defence of; the Faith of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Mediator of the Covenant of God; He who came to ratify and fulfil it, the Covenant which God Himself delivered to Man when that Covenant became necessary by the Fall of Man, the crime of Man, the defection of Man, in that early period of human history, that encrustated Man's consciousness, penetrated his constitution, and tore him away from the consciousness of his original Unity with God? And the fulfilment of the Promise is no more and no less than the actual restoration in human life of that Divine Union, the Divine Hypostasis, that Man forfeited at the time of the Fall. And the Great Master Himself lived and died in order to finish the Covenant, so that Man, believing, and going on believing, and following His Teaching, should ultimately realise, in this life, the fulfilment of all the Provisions of the Covenant. The old saints knew that Teaching from A to Z. They knew the Covenant with an intelligence, an understanding, and a fulness, that is absolutely lacking in the cleverest and wisest, as well as the simplest people of to-day. I would rather have a lot of children to talk to about the Covenant, the Path of the Divine Mysteries, than those learned men who know so much you cannot teach them anything. But "all these died in the Faith." Now, how did they live and "die in the Faith"? Because when

you live and die in a Faith, it is self-evident that you must also live and die in faith in "the Faith." You cannot live in an abstract philosophy, you cannot die for a mere forensic principle; but you can live by faith in it, and it may become an enduring, strengthening, inspiring, enthusing force, that would make you face a thousand deaths, and make you ready to be sawn asunder a thousand times, as Isaiah, and not flinch. But they died in a faith, they died in a belief, they died on the strength of a Promise that they knew, living and dying in that particular dispensation, it would be thousands of years before the fulfilment of it. Could you do that? Knowing it would be thousands of years before the fulfilment of the Promise could be granted to you that would make all the difference in your life and eternal prospects? Could you live in the faith of a Promise so protracted in its fulfilment as that? You could if you would. There is not a soul here who could not do that, if he would but take it up. These people had the courage to take it up; they believed in it. How did they get that belief in it? They were not fools, and they were not fanatics; they had clear intellects, and a certain strength of will. They all had that. They were not fools and fanatics. Then how did they get "the Faith"? How was the Faith evidenced to their understanding? How was it proved to their consciousness? How was it they were affected and influenced by the truth of a Promise, of a message, of a tremendous system of regenerative processes that was not to be fulfilled for thousands of years ahead of their own particular contemporary time? I will tell you, or I will try to tell you. You may take it or leave it. I do not want to force it on your belief.

We do know there was such a thing as "Vision and Revelation" in those Old Testament times. That there were certain men in every age and generation—a few at any rate—they were few and far between—who were taught by God, cultured by God, trained by God, and brought to the point of being able to prophesy for God. How did they

prophesy? They did not prophesy by guess-work, but what took place was, as in the case of Isaiah—Isaiah had a vision, he went to sleep. He did not go to sleep really, but he lapsed from physical function and faculty. Although he was not unconscious, the whole of his physical sense-faculty, his mentality, was merged, rapt, in the spirit; and the spirit, for the time being, had complete ascendancy of the flesh, so that the spirit expanded itself (like gas escaping from a balloon), and it spread forth. And when the Spirit is freed from the encumbrance of the flesh, there is no limit to the Spirit's function, capacity and faculty. It is everywhere at every moment. Therefore there was no journeying and wandering of any discarnated spirit of Isaiah. What took place was simply an expansion of his Spiritual capacity of seeing and hearing. He was in union and fellowship with the Heavenly Places immediately, and then, after he came to himself again, and all those who were not fit to hear the message that he had to give were taken out of the audience, he spake and uttered what he saw and what he heard. And what he saw and what he heard was a beautiful vision of the Seven Heavens, and of the Divine Mysteries relating to each of the Seven Heavens; and also a black, dark vision of the firmamental zone of this earth in its present state, which he had to pass through in order to enter into the pure, crystalline atmosphere of the Seven Heavens. That is how the saints got the true, indisputable testimony of the Divine Mysteries, given by accredited prophets, whose lives and conversation, whose habits of life and conduct, were in exact conformity with the professions they made of being the seers, the mouthpieces and spokesmen of God. Never believe a person who does not live consistently with what he teaches. He is not worth listening to. Now, if they had that testimony, and if they could believe in the prophets as they did, on the grounds of the prophets' own experience and testimony, and the intensity of their speech and language—if they could do that—why is it not done to-day? Do you believe in

every man, and take him for a Prophet, who gets up in a pulpit and preaches sermons? You do not. We have got the habit of disbelieving people in the world to-day, and there are very few living, except one or two honoured saints, that we have an inclination to put any faith in at all; and even those honoured and consistent saints that we have an inclination to put our faith in, I do not think we would have sufficient confidence in the Divine Inspiration of these saints, or the Prophetic value of their "sermons," that would make us quite certain that they were not under some delusion, or reiterating some dogmatic hotch-potch of the Schools. It was not so in those days. And yet the message these prophets had to give was a message of slaughter, of bloodshed, of persecution, of torture. It was even so with Isaiah when he came back to earth to deliver the message to King Manasseh. Manasseh ordered him to be put to death, and had him sawn in two pieces. That is how Isaiah met with his death. His Vision was a message of death to him. So it was at the risk of their lives for them to hearken to the message, to believe in it. "These all died in Faith, not receiving the Promise." That comes therefore to the point that they had the Five Valours. They must have had the Five Valours. They could not have got on without them. And, my dear brethren, let me tell you that the Five Valours are going to be the secret of your triumph, of your winning in the race. You need the Five Valours, and it is only because you have never learned the truth of the Five Valours, that you have been wandering along all this life, pitched here and pitched there—and the more true you are, very often it happens that the more you go into all kinds of thoughts, studies, researches and explorations in philosophy, religion and truth—to get what will satisfy you as the great truth that cannot be questioned, the truth that you would be willing to live for, and die for, and so you have followed the beckoning of the Path all this time. Now, when the Path is presented to you, you need the Valours to go through the Path. You will need

it. You will never be fit to fight on the Path without it. It will tax your courage and vitality to go even a few steps in advance on the Path. But I do not think I need press that point to-night, because it has been pretty well drilled into most of us who have been attending these lectures and lessons. Therefore the Five Valours of a Disciple are essential, and I want to explain them in a few brief words.

First of all, *Faith*. That is the foundation of all the Valours, it is the fundamental principle, it is the root from which all virtues and valours spring, grow and fructify. Faith. What is Faith? Do you know what Faith is? I would like to ask you to define Faith. It is most difficult to define. Faith is absolute trust, confidence in that in which you believe, or those in whom you believe. You are asked, therefore, to plant your faith on several objects in the Path of the Divine Mysteries. First of all, you have to plant your Faith in *God*, your Heavenly Father, without a questioning shadow of a doubt about it. None of your "think" gods; none of your diaphanous gods that have no personality and no character, no "body, parts nor passions," designated as a divine "principle," "immanent" and "transcendent" in this beautiful world of ours. That is not *God*. You cannot worship that. Have you ever worshipped a "transcendence"? Have you ever loved an "immanence"? Have you ever prayed to a "principle"? I should want something more than that to worship, honour, love, obey and trust in. Trust in an abstraction? It is like trusting in gas. But you trust in God as your personal Heavenly Father, which is a proposition in itself that will require a lot of philosophical explaining away — your Heavenly Father, Who is the Archetype of all organic things, the first Being, the first Exister, the first Giver of life and form to every organic being that exists in the universe, and to every organic being in eternal pasts. Every attribute and quality and faculty of God Himself resides potentially in all organisms, who all are potentially made in the Image and Likeness of God their Father and Arche-

type. Therefore, if you take an atom, an infinitesimal cell, you will find that atom is also a Spirit-counterpart of its Archetype, of its Parent, namely, *God*. In evolution it unfolds itself into the fuller proportions of the complete likeness of the Divine Being. There is never an increment or accretion comes to it in its normal mode of development, in the process of its evolution, but simply an unfolding, like the flower that unfolds and spreads out to the perfect blossom. Therefore, what we know of ourselves in this present material existence, which is only ephemeral, temporal and transient, does not belong to that organism which is made in the Likeness of God. We have destroyed that Likeness. We are nothing else than effigies, a mixture of material creature forms bundled up in what we call our bodies. But beneath that there is a Spirit, which was originally made in the Likeness of God, buried beneath the crust of the flesh. The purpose of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, therefore, is to get back to God, to win our way back to Union with Him. And we can only do that if we believe in God, if we are believers in Him, if we " believe that He is, and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek after Him." Therefore we have to put our Faith, first of all, in the Personal God. And it is your duty to study what the Personal God is, to study all about Him, His whole eternal past, His benignity, His glorious attributes, and the full likeness of His Personality.

The second object that Faith trusts in and fixes itself upon, is *the Lord Jesus Christ*, our Great Master, the Only-Begotten Son of God, eternally present with God, co-existent with Him, co-eval with Him, and in all His likeness of God a perfect pattern of Him. And it is in the Lord Jesus Christ that we have Mediation, or mediumship between God and us. It is through the Lord Jesus Christ, our Great Master, that the Truth is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit, which is the Divine Essence that pours from the Being and Person of God through the Being and Person of the Son of God, our Great Master, and through all varieties and forms

of beings in the Heavenly Places. Through the "Shekinah" of God He passes His Spirit down to us in the tabernacles of our own bodies, and if we are only submissive to God's Teaching—willing—there will be apertures made in our bodies, openings, avenues, forced through the ear, the eye, the tissues of the body, by which that Spirit can be imparted to us for the "quickening" of that which is to be "quickened" within us before it can possibly be "begotten"—"born." That is the "*travail*" of the soul—the "dark night of Brahma," some people call it—the period of pregnancy, from the moment of its conception and quickening to life, so that the Spirit can push its way through all the obstacles of the flesh, and find an outlet in the intelligence, the consciousness, the speech and the utterance of life and conduct in the individual personality. You have to put your Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I have not time to dwell upon that, but just to give you a suggestive idea to follow out.

The next object of Faith is rather an awkward one for me to define. That is, you have to put your Faith in those whom God sends and appoints in His Ek-Klesia—His *apostles*, *prophets*, *teachers*, and so forth. The reason why such a tortuous journey has been made by most of us towards the Path of the Divine Mysteries, to follow it at all, to hear about it, to learn of it, is because there have been for many centuries past, no "apostles" and no "prophets," and no "teachers" of the Sacred Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries—of the great Covenant of God. There have been no people living in this world for many centuries—since the death of the Apostles—who have had "*Vision and Revelation*," as the Prophets and Apostles had, to base their teaching upon, and their warnings and ministrations and instructions of the Truth have not been founded on actual knowledge and experience. We have been living for centuries past in an age of dogmatic bunkum, in an age of tradition, in an age of formula, in an age of rites and ceremonies—which may have meaning in them, but have no efficacy—because there has been wanting the teacher, the

prophet, the apostle. Now, who is the prophet, the teacher, the apostle, whom God does and did "appoint in His Church"—who are they? Are they chosen by man? Are they consecrated by man? Are they ordained by man? Are they appointed or designated by the "laying on" of human hands? Are they trained in the great Universities, in scholarship, in theology, Greek and Hebrew, and all the other curricula of theological education—is that the kind of prophet and apostle God "appoints in His Church"? *No.* St Paul says of himself, speaking of the time when he was chosen by God for the ultimate appointment of an apostle—he says: "I was not disobedient"—what to? The Bishop's ordination? The laying on of hands? No.—"I was not disobedient to the Heavenly Vision." And that is the one crux, the *sine quâ non*, of apostleship—"obedience to the Heavenly Vision." Seeing, not in any superficial, symbolical, or clerical sense, but in a literal sense, the "Heavenly Vision." That is the stable, sound, solid and only basis on which any prophet or apostle can stand and deliver and declare that which he was sent to declare, the "*words of Faith and Truth.*" All that ever come in front of Him, Who is the Voice that speaks through the prophets and the apostles, Jesus said, are only "thieves and robbers." Therefore there must be Faith in Him whom, in the Ek-Klesia, we call the "Master," which is only another word for "teacher," preceptor—"*Didaskalos*," in the Greek. Not meaning an autocrat, or a person who rules and is the arbiter of the faith and actions of individual disciples—not a bit. He is the Divinely sent messenger, minister, and slave of the Ek-Klesia, for the instruction of the saints, for their didactic culture, raising and bringing them up from "babes in Christ" to youths in Christ, to men in Christ, until they become old men in maturity in Christ, themselves capable and qualified to be sent forth as apostles, or prophets, or teachers in God's Ek-Klesia. University "degrees" are of no value. There is only one set of "degrees" that is of any consequence in the Ek-Klesia, and that is what we call

" the degrees of Initiation in the Divine Mysteries " ; not given nor applied in any human temple nor by any mystic rites, nor formularies, nor secret workings, nor behind " closed-tyled " doors and " inner-guards," nor at the hands of " worshipful masters," and so on. None of these. Nothing of the hanky-panky trickings of this world; nothing symbolical, nothing of a ceremonial character, nothing of human instrumentality. These Initiations—where do they take place ? I will tell you, because I have been there. They take place in the Seven Heavens. They are absolutely and purely Celestial and Spiritual Transactions. And who is the one who initiates ? The Master of that sacred ceremony, which is not a ceremony really ; who is the Master who performs the Celestial Initiations ? The Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Master, He is the Grand Initiator. And in the temples of those high courts of Heaven assembled are the angels, and the risen saints, standing on the right hand and the left hand of the Throne of those Celestial Temples, on which Throne is seated the Great Master Himself, Who calls each " candidate " caught up into those Heavenly Places into the Sacred Stations of the Divine Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven. And this is what Jesus meant when He said to His Disciples, who were potential " candidates," qualifying, developing, by slow processes of instruction and testing and ordeal during the Master's own life,—" Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but unto them that are without, all things are given in parables." And men have been worshipping *symbols* all these centuries, like the Pharisees and priests of the temple in olden days ; worshipping the symbols, the outward signs, without any knowledge, conception, or experience of the Heavenly Things they symbolise. The symbols, the doctrines, the creeds, the confessions of faith, the catechisms, the sacramentalism, and all the different kinds of symbols, alone are known and worshipped in the religions of to-day. We worship symbols, and if you do not come right on the toe-line straight

to these symbols you are cast out. It does not matter what kind of church or society, or philosophy, or religion, or cult it is—if you are not absolutely at one with them in these symbols you are cast out; they have no more use for you, nor, for that matter, have you any use for them. But it is not so in the Path of the Divine Mysteries, because it is not the symbols that we follow. We discard the symbols as being, in these days, absolutely useless. And not only useless, but stupid and very dangerous things to follow. You can worship the nut-shell, worship the shell, and never crack the shell at all, nor get at the kernel. What is the good of a nut with the shell only? We have broken the shell. We have dissected the symbols, and have cast them from us as potsherds, and now we have got possession of that sacred, that strong, that Divine Wisdom, "*the Faith*," in which our brethren of the Old Testament "lived and died, not receiving the Promise" that is ours to possess to-day. Therefore you have got to believe in the "Master"; to put your faith in the Master. And here comes the point. It is very difficult to be a "Master." It is terribly difficult to be a "Master." A dear lady friend of mine who is still living, though very aged—very learned and a well-known writer—used to correspond with me when I was in the West Indies. She was indirectly instrumental in publishing my first books "*Progressive Creation*" and "*Progressive Redemption*," and she always used to write and call me "dear master." And when I got home to England she invited me to stay with her, which naturally I did, and she never liked me after that. She told a friend of mine the reason. She said, "You know, I was expecting to find a man with a very pallid complexion, a very beautiful seraphic countenance, with long flowing white hair, and that every word that came from his lips would be like jewels of wisdom, jewels of knowledge and loveliness and beauty." Then I came rollicking in, smoking cigarettes, and absolutely un-"master"-like, and she has never got over the shock. Therefore I do not ask you to believe in the personality of

the Master, the mere man. You will be terribly shocked if you do. If your faith is in the Master, as a mere personality, he will kick you, he will knock you, he will simply shock you to such an extent that you will be almost inclined to burn and destroy him—if you are going to put your trust in him as Master, in that personal sense of the word. But there is one dear lady disciple who has been following the Path for ten years, through disasters and tribulations, and I used to shock her, and say to her the most rude things. But she had got the Truth. The Truth had come to her distinctly. She had testimony by "revelation and vision"—you know what I mean. By vision she had obvious and distinct proof, no matter what my personality was like—she was not going to worship me or follow me at all, as a man, a personality, but only because I had got the Truth—and she would argue this way: "if Mr Sampson has got the Truth, then God loves that man, and I love that man, no matter how I dislike him, because he is the only man who has got the Truth and is living in accordance with it." And she has never gone back on that. So, do not worship the personality, nor honour or respect the personality. But you have got to have trust in the "Master," in his spiritual capacity and magistery.

Then you have got to put your faith in the *Truth* that the Master teaches. You have to put unquestioning Faith in the Truth—what we call "*the Ek-Klesia Teaching.*" And I am positive of this; although the Teaching is up against every one of your pre-conceptions, conventions and prejudices, though the Teaching just simply disturbs your peace of mind, and makes you restless, and possibly resentful, it is going to turn you inside out, and upside down—as in some cases it does so. A brother clergyman wrote to me some time ago and said he had made up his mind that he was going to come right out from the Church of England and follow the Path. "No," I said, "I never did it; I was pushed out, and you wait until you are pushed out." "But," I said "I am perfectly certain you will not stay

long in the Church, waiting to be pushed out, if you preach without premeditation of what you are going to say. You will soon find you will get the 'chuck,' unless you have got a very amiable chief."

Then again, on the Path, we learn also Faith in *circumstances*. That is a philosophy very few people understand. I am not going to tell you anything about that, but it is only on the Path of the Divine Mysteries that you can absolutely trust circumstances; it is only in anticipatory Faith of the Sacred Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries that you can possibly trust circumstances at all. But if you are making for the Path, as a true, sincere, courageous soul, and you anticipate, as the Old Testament saints did, who lived and "died in the Faith, not receiving the Promise"; you can do the same, and though circumstances may be very untoward and awry and difficult, and hard, and painful even to death, whether you are *on* the Path or not *on* the Path, but making *towards* the Path, put your Faith in God, put your Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, put your Faith in the "Master"—the only man God and the Great Master has yet been able to get—put your Faith in the Master that teaches, put your Faith in the Teaching, and put your Faith in the circumstances that follow the Teaching, and you will learn what Krishna so beautifully teaches: that you will have no "concern for the results of action." Is not that fine? If you can put your trust in the Divine protection, in the Divine mediation, in the Divine power, in the Divine grace that is in you—put your Faith in God "working in you to will and to do of His good pleasure," energising in you; put your Faith in that, and stand on the Sacred Principle of self-non-existence, or Self-Abnegation, then I can promise you this; that you can live that peaceful, quiet, lovely life, in all the temporal tribulations and distresses of this world. You can put your Faith in every circumstance that happens, without concern for their results.

So much for Faith, and there is no need for me to dwell

much on the other four Valours. *Obedience* is naturally part of Faith, just as the whole includes the part. You cannot separate the two. You are not a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you do not believe in God, you do not believe in the "Master"; and you do not believe in the Teaching, or anything that has to do with the Sacred Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, *if you do not obey.* Obedience is nothing more than Faith in action. "Pistis" and "pistos," in the Greek, are very much alike. Then again, *Love.* Love does not mean affectionateness—a nice, sweet-smiling face. Not that kind of sickly sentimental love which is willing to bear tribulation and pinpricks with that struggling, calm composure that thinks it is absolutely inconsistent to have a frowning face, or impatience, because somebody treads on your pet corn. That is not Love. I like a person, when he feels a thing, to have it out, not to hide it. What is the use of suppressing your feelings? It only goes farther in. I will tell you what Love is. It is the fiery Divine Dynamic that links and welds together body, mind, soul, and spirit, with God in Heaven. That is Love. It is Divine magnetic force; the Divine attraction that magnetises you, as the magnet magnetises all the little particles of metal that come within its magnetic attraction. That is Love.

Then *Devotion.* I will tell you what Devotion is not. It is not "sitting in the silence," singing languorous hymns, meditating, saying: "I will, I will follow," "I am going to receive a message," and going into a state of ecstatic quietude and pietism. That is not Devotion. Devotion is not going and listening to men talking to you from pulpits and platforms. Not getting down on your knees until your legs ache, and praying to God Who does not hear you. I will tell you what Devotion means. It is "*de voto*," and if I understand Latin, it means "*I vote for.*" It is an "election" once and for ever made and persisted in, continued in, all your life. You "vote" for God. You have put down your name on the form, and put it in the ballot box, and you

cannot get it out again. It is devotion, not merely of money, wealth, houses, lands, but it means your whole being,—body, mind, soul and spirit—voted away from you, so that it does not belong to you any longer. It is only another form of Self-Abnegation.

Then finally, *Fortitude.* I could say a great deal about Fortitude. There is nothing very mysterious about Fortitude. It is something very practical. But I will just put it to you thus. Having heard what you have heard to-night, roughly, bluntly, and very faultily said ; stutteringly uttered with any amount of oratorical errors—I never put my punctuations right, at least that is what the critics say, but having heard what I have said to-night, will you try to put that into practice ? What you have heard to-night, what you will hear next Monday, and what you will hear on the following nights that I am in London—will you just put it into practice ? And if you have not got a super-natural, super-human fortitude and courage you will never do it. And that courage is only based on Faith. It works through Obedience, empowered by Love, and guaranteed by Devotion, and until those conditions are fulfilled the bravest of you will find that your courage will go into your boots. You will never be able to stand it. It is far too serious and difficult except under those conditions—applying all those Five Valours. But God Himself giveth all Grace, the Lord Jesus Christ mediates all Grace, the Master and spokesman delivereth all Grace in the Teaching (*which is the Expression of all Grace*), and in the circumstances of the Path which are very often hard, even for Grace to endure.

LECTURE IV

THE SEVEN KEYS OF GRADUATION

It was my great privilege yesterday to address, by invitation, quite a large audience of school-girls—" common or garden " school-girls—and the opportunity was given, after the lecture or talk, for them to ask questions. It is very rarely I allow an audience to put questions after a lecture, because I find it such a demoralising thing. The questions which are generally put by the ordinary adult are so utterly inconsequent and lacking of point that I generally say, " No questions." You get a question as far as the poles away from the point of the lecture, and it dissipates and disturbs the general feeling and consciousness, and everybody goes away switched off from the main line on to side lines. Therefore I am not going to have questions and answers here. But I will say this. I have never, in all my experience, been put such " cute," such " cunning," and such really intelligent questions as these girls put to me. They got up and asked questions that completely amazed me. That children of such an age could possibly have taken in the Truth that afternoon so clearly and so intelligently, and put such questions was astounding. I was describing the Divine Ego, and saying that it is like a little, undeveloped speck in the organism that has not yet got into a state of *existence*, and I described it in the simile of the egg. The egg has the shell, skin, albumen, yolk, sac, water, and then the speck inside the water. There are these seven parts in the egg particularly defined, but the whole importance of

the egg lies in that little speck that you cannot see, and until that little, tiny thing in the egg has been fertilised and sat on—literally sat on—and impregnated and hatched, the egg is of no use, except to eat. The devil is always trying to *eat* the egg now all the time. He is trying to get us, to "devour" us. That is Scriptural language. "Well," I said to the children, "you know, in the beginning the chicken is all egg, and in the end the egg is all chicken, and when the egg gets to be a chicken, it cracks the shell, and out it comes, a life, an organism. Before that it was an 'is,' then it becomes an 'existence' (ex-'is')." One of the girls asked me this question: "Mr Sampson, does evil ever get into the 'is'?" "No," I said, "it never gets into the 'is.'" "Then I suppose, Mr Sampson, when the '*is*' becomes the *ex-'is*,' the '*is*' pushes out the evil altogether?" "Yes." "And cracks the shell?" "Sure," I answered, "it cracks the shell, and the shell is the flesh, and there is no more flesh, in that sense, but the chicken is the egg in its perfect existent form, free from the incumbrance of the shell." They got hold of the idea. It is a fine idea. I am not the first who has used that illustration; it is one of the truest, clearest expressions in ancient mystical teaching. I want to show you to-day how the "*is*" becomes the "*ex-is*"; in other words, how that which is "*being*" in you can become "*existence*" in you. It is only a very colloquial and somewhat ignorant way of translating the old saying—I forget at the moment where it is found—"As within, so without." I often put it this way:—"*When that which is without becomes as that which is within, then that which is within becomes that which is without.*" That is only another way of putting it, more philosophically. When the "*is*" becomes "*ex-is*"—the word "existence" means "ex-is," as distinguished from "is." I want to explain how the "*is*" becomes "*ex-is*"—how the "being" becomes "existence"; how the Real Self dissipates the false and unreal self by gradual processes of evolution in the Redemptive Labours of the Path of the Divine Mysteries.

Last Monday I gave you the working tools, the Five Weapons, or Valours of a Disciple—Faith, Obedience, Love, Devotion and Fortitude. In the space of that one lecture I could not describe to you just exactly what were the materials that you use those tools upon, and I want to describe those materials—if I can put it in that fashion—and therefore the subject of this lecture is: "*The Seven Keys of Graduation in the Path of the Divine Mysteries.*" Of course you know what "graduation" means. Some of us have been to the University—some of us have not—and when we speak about an "undergraduate," we mean a man who is studying at the University, has passed his matriculation, and is graduating towards the time when he becomes a "graduate"—"takes his degree." Nothing in this world that is worth having, that is worth attaining, can be got in a minute, without time and toil. It is not worth having if you have not got to work for it, and to spend time and energy, sweat of brow, and sweat of body, and practise great self-sacrifice, to attain the end that you have in view. And yet, we think that when it comes to religion, we can swallow it in one gulp, and that by putting our Faith, by one act, in the Lord Jesus Christ we have once and for all done everything that can be done, and that has to be done to obtain eternal life; that if we can say: "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ," although we know nothing of what we really believe in at all, except the hazy acceptance of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ; that is the beginning and the end, the *sine quâ non*, of religion, and that all we have got to do afterwards is to go to church, go to communion, say our prayers regularly, do a little charitable work, and live ordinary, conventional, honourable, modest and good lives in this world, and then we shall find a "harp" waiting for us, and a "crown" put on our heads, and we shall sing songs and play on the harp for all eternity. That used to be the great idea, but it is not so much in these days. Lots of people nowadays have given up believing in Heaven. They think they can make their own Heaven on this earth

by making themselves, and everyone else, happy, everyone in his own particular way. The point I am aiming at is this. This principle of graduation is an absolutely essential one to be understood and accepted by every Disciple who follows the Path of the Divine Mysteries. You have to go along slowly, to progress, and the progressing is very often a very long and arduous process, and it is not always very easy to make that progress. We make it just as easy or difficult as we choose to make it. As I told those girls yesterday, "If you want to have a smiling face all the rest of your life, follow the Path of the Divine Mysteries." Of course you cannot keep a smiling face externally all the time, but you can have a smiling heart under the skin, a smile behind the pain and the grief that sometimes does affect and mar the actual physiognomy.

The course of graduation is of a seven-fold character. That is to say, there are seven distinct stages that have to be passed through and fulfilled on the Path of the Divine Mysteries before the Disciple can attain to any one of the Seven Golden Gates of Initiation in The Divine Mysteries; and this may seem a mystery to many of us here, because we do not know anything at all about it. But as to the Seven Golden Gates of Initiation, that is the subject I shall deal with next Monday, *D.V.* I want to-night to explain how you are to get through those Gates; how you are going to qualify for them, and the attainment of qualification is a process seven times repeated—seven times for each of these Seven Golden Gates. They really are the process of cultivation, or culture, in which the Disciple uses the Five Valours, of which I spoke last week; definitely, obstinately, doggedly, all the time, to obtain these seven qualities in the flesh of human nature, in that organic constitution of matter of which we are formed. We have built up and developed for ages and ages, in the microcosmic constitution of our being, a series of stratifications of earth habits. When we were born in this world in each lifetime, we took on a material body, a body that has head, limbs, eyes, and ears, and all the

other external organs and senses of the human organism of the only creature or personality we seem to have any natural acquaintance with on this earth. And then when we " pass out "—it used to be called " dying "—but when we die, or pass out, we discard this bit of earth, we break it, we leave it behind us. It is only clay, dust,—" Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." It is a lot of foolishness to talk about the resurrection of that clay body. It is no more than clay, dust, dirt—if you will forgive the word. You do not want to have that resurrected, I am certain. You would not like to have it back again, would you ? Then you go over and pass out, and if you have been living a good and true life—it does not matter what you have been doing in that life—you may have been feeding ducks and swine all the days of your life, you may have been worshipping all sorts of false gods ;—if you have been honestly and truly doing your best according to the light you have, do you think God is going to judge and condemn you for that ? " In the times of their ignorance," says Paul, " God winked at their ignorance," but there comes a time when God " winks " no longer. In other words, there comes a time when there is no ignorance for God to wink at ; and I can tell you, God will not wink at your ignorance once you have heard the Truth, as you are now hearing it. " To-day if you hear My Voice, harden not your hearts." If you go back and worship the things you have worshipped in the past, God will not " wink at your ignorance " any longer. For the knowledge He has given you, you will have to give an account. God only gives you that to which you are entitled. These earth habits have grown through many lives. Therefore, you understand, I do believe, and every sensible person I know who has a mind of his own, who is not tied and bound and strapped down by dogmas and traditions and creeds and doctrines of comparatively modern times—believes as I believe, in *pre-existence*, and the return to the earth, the constant return of the organism they call the " soul." That soul, or organism, or microcosm, returns,

and constantly returns to the earth-life. But where does it go in the intermediate state? I will tell you. It goes to Heaven, *if* the soul is a true, worthy, straightforward, honest soul, even though that soul in its life-time went to the "house of Rimmon" and worshipped the gods of the Assyrians—if that soul is what it is, if it tries to do the best it can, that soul will not go to Hell, it will not live in Hades, it will not live in the "firmament" or Astral Plane. It passes through the firmament, and enters into one or another of the Seven Heavens, its "Paradise," and there it remains until the due time comes for it to return. Then it takes on another body—not the same body resurrected, but another. It simply absorbs the clay, the dust, the gas, the smoke, and all the evil elements and polluted aura, that congregate around this devoted planet and its firmament, the Astral Plane—it takes it into its substance, and this *muck* penetrates into the microcosm, until the organism becomes an incrustated, earthly, polluted creature—hard, selfish, egotistical, conceited, ignorant, stupid, competitive, fighting and quarrelling, and all the rest of it,—mean and petty, and all the miserable "bag of tricks" every man in this world becomes as he grows older in sin. Little children are easy to teach. They are comparatively innocent and pure. They have only got a little of the hard earth-matter in them, which is not intrinsically bad. But matter is very sensitive and susceptible to the aura and corruption of its environment, so that they soon lose the beauty and purity of their infant nature, and they become just as hard as their mothers and fathers, their uncles and aunts, and all the rest of mankind. In the course of these ages of æonial translation, by repeated incarnations, they are confined to this earth and its corrupt environment, and each individual soul contracts correspondent habits in each lifetime.

But there is this to be understood and considered; that, in the course of each of these lives there is a modicum of Truth presented to that soul. There used to be, in ancient days, a great deal more Truth that confronted the souls of

intelligent people in this world, than there has been for many centuries past. That is a very hard saying, but it is so. And if they refuse that modicum of Truth given in their lifetimes in past ages, imparted to them by the prophets and teachers of their past incarnations, if they have rejected the teaching of the prophet, the teacher, or the priest, sent from God, and they pass out not having corresponded to the knowledge God had given to them through their Masters ; then they do not go to Heaven, because they have not hearkened to the Voice of God, they have not heeded the message of God's prophets and apostles. Therefore they go to the " firmament," " Hell," " the Astral Plane," where they belong. They go to the limit of their attraction, the zone of their earthly affinity. If the attraction is of the earth, earthy, of the world, worldly, of the devil, demoniacal, there that soul is bound to stay. Consequently, the firmament is the abode of souls who have not obeyed the Voice of God in past lives. They missed the mark in past days, in past lifetimes, they cannot get away from the earth, and are bound to remain in the atmosphere, or zone that lies beyond the earth-plane, " prisoners," as Paul calls them, " spirits in prison " ; and they have got to return some time, and they do return to this earth for other opportunities, in other lifetimes. And there are many sitting in this room who have returned within recent times—of course, in the case of all living now, it is within recent times—from the astral plane, and there are people in the astral plane listening to what we are saying here to-night. Multitudes upon multitudes of " spirits in prison " are listening to us, invisible to us, because they are " spirits," present in this room—and myriads of " spirits " surrounding this whole earth. Some of them are longing,—oh ! how they long, to get back to the earth to have another opportunity (which they had lost in former lives) to hear and obey the Master's teaching that they now see is again being taught on this earth, which has never been taught for many a century. They are listening to us here, watching us. And some hate us, and would

persecute us if they could, or make men persecute us. These people will come back. And each time we come back we form a fresh layer of earth habits. Therefore we are just like the earth itself. We are a replica of the earth-formation, which consists of various strata—red stone, sand-stone, granite, going down deeper to the chalk and the coal seams, and then we get to the conglomerates and the metals, and even to the gold that lies buried beneath the earth. So it is with us—stratifications of evil habits, earth habits, flesh habits, devil habits, hell habits, that have formed in us from the beginning of "Time," and we bring them with us microcosmically, and they are caked around by the flesh, with its external organs and senses, and thus we returned with the habits we contracted before; and then we form another stratification of habits in each lifetime, as we are doing now, in this present life. Those are what we call "earth habits," and we each individually (until the processes of Re-Generation begin to take place in us) are fulfilling these earth habits all the time. One of these girls asked me last night, "Don't you think that the goodness of some people will beneficially affect the badness of other people, and therefore the goodness of some people will help to break the shell of the badness of other people?" I said, "What people do you mean?" They were nonplussed, and could not answer. Then I put it in this way. I made them all repeat it after me. I would not presume to ask you to do it, because this is not a girls' school. But it is this: "*All actions are of the same quality as their source.*" "Well, now, there can be no source of actions that does not exist, can there?" The girls said, "No, no, there cannot be." "There can be," I went on, "no source of actions that has not any existence, and we know that the Real, Divine Self, the True Ego, has not any existence, because it is only an 'is'." Therefore the source of actions, and their qualities apparent in this world, can only be from that part of the organism which *exists*. Now, what is the part of the organism that "exists" in the ordinary unregenerate human being?

It is what we call the " flesh," the earth body. That is the only existent source of action. Therefore, in the unregenerate organism of humanity, there can be no intrinsic difference between " goodness " and " badness " at all ; they are all one and the same. They come from the same source, they are all of the same quality, though they may differ and vary in character, they are all tainted from the same root or fountain from which they come. The Path of the Divine Mysteries is to alter all this. The process of Re-Generation is intended to completely transmute or transform the whole constitution of the being, that the source of all actions shall proceed from only the one true, real, pure, eternal, Divine Source, and that is, the little speck that still " *is*," but " *is not.*" It does not *exist* yet ; it only " *is.*" And we have got to liberate, to set free, that little speck of God in us, the Divine Personality that is in us, the Real Ego, or Spirit, so that it may grow, and grow, and develop, and evolve, until finally it bursts forth into Christ, to " grow up into Christ," " unto the measure of the stature of the full age of Christ." Thus all actions, under those conditions, will be Right Actions, Divine Actions, Pure Actions, and that is the reason why Krishna speaks to Arjuna about the glory, the beauty, the happiness of those who worship him, who obey him, who come to him, who " know him as he is " ; that they shall have " no concern for actions, and no concern for the results of actions." How can you have concern for the results of actions when you know that the actions that you perform come from the source of the Divine Essence within you ? Therefore, on the Path of the Divine Mysteries we have to learn to cultivate Right Actions, the habit of Right Action ; and we start to do that from the very beginning, because the moment we put our Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Krishna—Christ—the moment we trust in Him, believe in Him, obey Him, give our love to Him, vote for Him, and indomitably practise the Teaching He gives us, that moment He gives Himself to us, He gives us of His Spirit. And He says to the Disciple, " Look here,

you have got all these earth habits, all these ages' growths of earth habits that you cannot discern—they are inside of you, they are part of your body—now I am going to take hold of you. Turn yourself over to Me, put yourself in My hands ; deliberately do it, do it sensibly, do it as literally as you would put your hand into Mine when shaking hands with Me. Then I will take possession of you, and I will take your eyes so that they see rightly, I will take your ears so that they will hear rightly, I will take your hands so that you will do rightly, I will take your feet so that they will go rightly, I will take your heart so that it will function rightly, in all its affections." There is no organ nor sense in your whole constitution that Jesus Christ, your Master in Heaven, will not absolutely control, so that everything that those organs perform, whether mental, psychical, physical, or spiritual, shall be performed, not by you any longer, but by Him.

That is the sum-total of what Self-Abnegation practically means. We cast our "self" out, we kill our "self," we put our "self" to death, and we rise into Christ, into that resurrection life in Christ in which it is His Spirit that moves in us, His Spirit that functions in us, His Spirit that sees and hears and speaks and walks and performs actions in us. That is the philosophy of the Path of the Divine Mysteries. But, then, all the time it is by Faith. As I explained to those girls, it is "playing the game of pretence." That sounds very shocking, but it is really so, for what is Faith but the sublimest form of imagination ? It is acting on the anticipation of things to come. "Faith is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things anticipated." That is what I call "pretence." When I was a little boy, I had six sisters, and we used to play in the nursery. And we had some neighbours not far away, named Peters, whom we very much admired, and they had six children too. So when we used to be shut up in the nursery, we used to play at being Peters." One would say, "Let us play Peters." So each of us chose our own personality. I would be Ted Peters, and another would be Jane Peters, and so on. We

each took the very character of the one we chose, and we played those characters. We laughed like them, talked like them, acted like them. We assumed all their mannerisms. Every action or trait that our sharp eyes had observed in those Peters' people we mimicked. We really believed that we were Peters, and we really were Peters for the time being. We got their habits, tricks and traits. That is Faith, the method of living by Faith, of living the anticipatory life of things not seen, but sure of fulfilment. If we do it spasmodically, we do not get on very well. It is no good your pretending to be Jesus Christ in fits and starts, because if you are yourself one time, and Christ another time, you will have trouble. But if you start placing yourself in the hands of Jesus Christ, for Him to perform His actions in your body, if you give your organs and senses to Him, you cannot, for instance, when you are in business, carry out some shady transaction. It is the same with every other kind of thing. If you are going to be selfish, you know that Jesus Christ could not be selfish. If you are going to be petulant or irritable people, you know that Jesus Christ could not be petulant or irritable, and therefore you are lapsing from Jesus Christ. That is what Paul means by "walking in the Spirit": "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh." But, if you "walk in the flesh," you shall "of the flesh reap corruption." You see the distinction between the two. Most people do try to "walk in the Spirit," but they are always tumbling into the flesh, back and forth, like the fellows in that house we used to see in old-fashioned times that told the weather. Sometimes one fellow would come out, and at other times the other fellow, according to the state of the weather. As the old saying in the Prayer Book runs, "Man never continueth in one stay." That is very true. In the Path of the Divine Mysteries we all "continue," and always "continue in one stay." The very first thing we do when we make up our minds, having counted the cost—have you ever counted the cost of living one day absolutely unselfishly? Have

you ever counted the cost of living a day absolutely without concern for the results of your actions? Have you ever counted the cost of living a single hour even as the lilies live? If so, you will see it is not so easy—but having counted the cost, we make up our minds to obey the Lord Jesus Christ, to love Him, to vote for Him all the time, and to have the courage to live in obedience and conformity to Him all our lives. What are we doing then? Well, it is as good as "playing Peters." We play Christ, and the more we play Christ, and get into the habit of playing Christ, the more we get no longer to be *playing Christ*, but to *become Christ*—Christ in us—and we spontaneously perform the habits of Christ-Action. In other words, He performs His own habits in us. Therefore all the selfishness disappears, all the irritability disappears, all the pettiness and meanness disappear—everything disappears that is contrary—opposed—to the character, the goodness and the purity of our Blessed Lord and Saviour, our Great Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. Every incongruity of conduct and character vanishes. Therefore there are Seven Keys by which we open these Seven Golden Gates, which means seven methods, or processes, by which we attain to the actual Personality of Jesus Christ, by which the Real Self, the Christ-Self within us, spreads itself, unfolds itself, until finally, instead of the "chicken being all egg, the egg is all chicken"; instead of the Christ-Ego, or Spirit, being only an invisible inanimate, lifeless entity in our being, it becomes our being entirely. . . . Well, what are those Seven Keys?

The First Key, of course, is the fundamental, or foundation Key. It is the Key of *Self-Abnegation*, which I have translated into the word "self-non-existence," and I need not dwell upon that to-night, because I have already explained that Key.

The result of self-non-existence, or Self-Abnegation, is the Second Key. It comes forth from it. It really is the outcome of it, and that is *Equilibrium*. Now, what is *Equilibrium*? We talk about an "unbalanced mind."

Often people say, "Mr Sampson has an unbalanced mind; he lacks balance." But it does not mean that, although what I do mean by Equilibrium includes a "balanced mind," you do get a balanced mind when you get Equilibrium. I explain it in this way. You take a pliant rod, which is perfectly straight, and fix it up perpendicularly, and on that rod there are numbers of little strings running round like the ribbons of a maypole. This rod is bent this way, or that way, according to the pressure of objects fixed to the strings. We are like that by nature. "God made man upright," perpendicular, "but man sought out many inventions," and therefore, in this world, we are pulled around, here, there, and everywhere, by all kinds of objects of attraction which this world presents to us. It may be money, or houses, or science, or art, or philanthropy, or religion—anything you can imagine of this multitude of attractions that surround us in this world. Therefore we are always crooked. When I say "crooked," I mean bent, or twisted—sometimes almost bent double. We are pulled here, and pulled there, distracted crookedly, instead of attracted vertically. The result is that we have lost our perpendicular. Therefore Equilibrium is one of the qualities we begin to cultivate in the Path of the Divine Mysteries, one of the Keys that open the Golden Gates. When we put our Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, He puts us out of existence, and He snaps every one of those strings. You know what would happen if a string had got this pole bent down, and suddenly it is cut. The pole would spring up in a second, and remain perfectly upright. That is what Equilibrium is—the perfect vertical, the perfect upright and perpendicular state of the individual, body and soul, who has accepted the Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, taken up the Five Valours of a Disciple, and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a part of the process leading to Perfection.

The Third Key is *Detachment*, which means *Indifference*. Well, of course, if you have been *detached*, if all the ties to

these objects of attraction have been snapped, whether of father, mother, wife, child, neighbours, wedding presents, jewels, money, cleverness, or any other kind of thing you were hanging on to, so that there is not an attraction left in you; if the tie has been broken, if the strings have been cut; you are *detached*, you are *indifferent*, and you do not care two cents whether you get a bridecake or not, or any other object in life. It does not matter to you a little bit. A lady told me a short time ago that she had lost all her money. At the first moment it was a shock to her, but now she does not mind. She is absolutely indifferent whether she has the money or not. And there are thousands of other different objects of attraction that you become absolutely indifferent to, and the most particular of all objects of attraction that you become indifferent to is that poor, little, selfish, egotistical "self" of yours. You do not consult yourself any longer. You are absolutely indifferent to pleasure or pain, to victory or defeat, to gain or loss, or any other of the "pairs of opposites," because there are no "pairs of opposites." That is very easy. It is as simple as "falling off a log," as the Americans say. It is easy to understand. Then why don't you practise it? But you have got to start at the beginning, Self-Abnegation; then you get your Equilibrium, and then will come Detachment, because if we are attached to a single thing, the pole begins to bend down, but if you get Equilibrium, through attraction to the Christ-Magnet, nothing can pull it one way or another.

The Fourth Key is *Insensibility*. That is simply a fuller development and growth of Indifference or Detachment. You get so used to doing with or without, you get so used to the fusion of opposites, so used to being indifferent; you get so used to everything—to heaps of things piled upon you, or to everything taken away from you—and being absolutely indifferent as to whether you are rich or poor, a success or a failure, you become absolutely insensible to anything that comes to you, or goes from you, good, bad or indifferent. You have reached a stage of perfect serenity and peace and

rest, in the Faith of Christ, that you know you are in His hands, and you do not mind anything a little bit.

The Fifth Key is *Inflexibility*. That is a very big order for most people. It really means incapability of yielding to any kind of inducement to be slack or lax, in any of these Seven Golden Keys. Inflexibility is untiring perseverance in the Five Valours and the Seven Golden Keys, no matter how your back aches, and your head aches, and your foot aches, and your heart aches, and your soul aches; when you feel as if you would be only too glad to die. Inflexibility means absolute carelessness of all pains and aches, wearinesses and sufferings, utter regardlessness of any kind of inducement or temptation to be drawn away from that perfect perseverance, of Detachment from all objects, from all pleasure or pain, gain or loss, victory or defeat, ignorance or wisdom, success or failure, or any other of the "pairs of opposites" that belong to this world. Inflexibility, that says with Paul, "none of these things move me." Sound as a bell, firm as a rock, stable as a statue, and yet full of natural vibrant sensitiveness of the most refined and delicate nature. And the Initiate on the Path of the Divine Mysteries, when he reaches a certain stage, becomes very sensitive. You will never make a mistake in having sympathy and solicitude and good thought for True Mystics, for Initiates and Masters in the Ek-Klesia, because sometimes it does comfort them, in the hours of affliction, to know that there are those who sympathise, those who love them, those who care for them in their sufferings, especially in those sufferings which are theirs only to endure. And you will all have this same feeling. You must never think, because we talk about Indifference and Detachment and Insensibility, that we are callous, have no "bowels of mercy or compassion." It is quite the reverse. There is no kindness we would withhold from another. We would go out of our way to help our brother. We would do everything to show our sympathy. We would even break our hearts out of pity and commiseration; though we do not make a profession of these things.

It is in secret, and our "left hand knoweth not what our right hand doeth." No one knows those harrowing feelings and sorrowing griefs for the afflictions of humanity, that are felt so consciously and poignantly by those on the Path of the Divine Mysteries. Therefore do not run away with the idea that these Seven Golden Keys, which are the habits of Christ Himself, Whose habits are the habits of God our Father, are habits of stoniness, of hard-heartedness, because if you do, you will be making a great mistake. It is just the opposite. So learn that if you want to be a soft-hearted, gentle, kind soul, you could not be a better one than when you get on the Path of the Divine Mysteries, because then nothing belongs to you, and you will share everything, and will be only too glad to part with everything you have got if it is to do something for the Christ, and, in Christ, "for all men, but especially for the Household of the Faith." But we never do anything to pauperise the world, and we do not attempt to undo the misery this world has done for human nature. Let the world take care of its own. "Let the dead bury their dead." That does not mean that we have not tender hearts; but we have something more to do, a greater Master to serve, a greater purpose to perform, than those things which begin with the body and end with the body; nor do we, as the manner of some is, use "charity" as a means of drawing souls to Jesus Christ and the Path.

The Sixth Key is *Knowledge.* "KNOWLEDGE" in capital letters. It does not mean "understanding" and "knowledge" of science and philosophy—all very good in their way, but it does not mean that. It means Divine Knowledge; what they used to call in the old Greek, "Gnosis." In ancient times people who had attained the "*Gnosis*" were called "*Gnostics,*"—*people who Know.* They did not Know by philosophy or psychology. They did not Know by University education,—by degrees, graduation in scholarship, and diplomas and so forth. *They Knew.* How did they Know? Because God gave them the Knowledge,

imparted to them the Truth, placed them at the fountain-head—within their own Spirit, so that all Truth became their Truth—Knowledge.

Then we get to the Seventh Golden Key, which is, *Rest.* "He that hath ceased from his Labours, hath entered into his Sabbath," says Paul, "as God ceased from His Labours, and entered into His Sabbath, on the Seventh Day." That is the meaning of the word "Rest," the true Spiritual significance of the "Sabbath Day." Is there anything nicer than rest after labour? It may take you a long time before the Labours are finished, and even when the Labours are finished, and you know the Seven Mysteries, you find that you are then only just beginning to penetrate vaster fields of exploration, of the earth "self," and of the "microcosm," and of the Christ-Self, in this wonderful endless Path. But the object and joy of these Seven Golden Keys is this: when once you have attained to "Rest," all the Labours of the Path, all the sufferings of the Path, all the tests and ordeals of the Path, are nothing to you but a sweet memory, because you are absolutely at Rest. At Rest in God, "seated with Christ in the Heavenly Places," "hid with Christ in God." That is what the Hindu calls "*Nirvana.*" The Hindu word has assumed a false meaning in common understanding, as the annihilation of existence. But it does not mean absorption into nothing, nor extinction of personality by mergence in abstract and universal deity. It simply means what it says. It means the absorption of the organism into God, an organism at Rest in God; but always an organism, so that "that which is within has become that which is without, and that which is without has become that which is within," and there is no difference between God and the organism. That is what we call the "*Divine Union.*" Sometimes it is called the "Divine Marriage,"[1] and that is the climax, the Seventh Golden Key. And this process takes place in seven degrees or

[1] For a full explication of the Mystery of the Divine Marriage, *vide* "Theou Sophia," Vol. II., "Re-Generation," by the author.

stages of Graduation. It has seven distinct series of development and progress in the Path of the Divine Mysteries. Therefore you see that the Path of the Divine Mysteries is a philosophy in itself; it is a science in itself; it is a progress and a process in itself; and it is something that you have got to give yourself absolutely and solely to, for all life to come. It does not mean that you have to go out into a wilderness in a literal or material sense, to live objectively the life of an "ascetic" in a "cave." It does not mean that. That may suit certain oriental mystics, and I am not saying a word against it for their part, but it does not constitute any part of the process in the Path of the Divine Mysteries, though the processes of the Path of the Divine Mysteries may incur in you many performances, endurances, tests and ordeals, even greater than those undertaken by the oriental mystic or ascetic, and which literal "asceticism" and material "caves" symbolise. The steadfast practice of the Seven Keys of Graduation, and their attainment in fact and actuality, from the first act of faith, to the final realisation in fact, must essentially be a condition of "endurance to the end," of which no symbol could be more apposite than that of the "wilderness," the "cave," and the "ascetic." The Seven Golden Keys are the only way to liberate the Spirit, the only way to attain to the state of the Divine Union which I have been describing to you in these few words.

LECTURE V

THE SEVEN GATES OF INITIATION IN THE DIVINE MYSTERIES

THE subject we are to consider to-night is the most sacred of all subjects, and I feel as Moses, who was warned, when he saw the inexplicable phenomenon of the " burning bush," to " take off the shoes from his feet, because the ground on which he was to tread was holy ground." We have almost lost the real sense of veneration, of reverence. We have got a false reverence which means bowing and scraping and kotowing to the Deity, which I have a great objection to, as God Himself has, but there is a reverence of the Spirit which controls the body, the speech, and the mind, so that the individual may realise, without trying to realise, without pretending to realise, or without posturing in the realisation, the tremendous weight, the pressure of the draw to reverence and respect for God and His sacred Truth. Our subject is, " The Seven Golden Gates of Initiation in the Divine Mysteries," but if you have thought that I am going to give you the revelation to-night of what those Mysteries really are, you will be disappointed, because it is not permissible to discourse on the Divine Mysteries, except on the rarest occasions, and amongst those who are qualified to hear. They are not " secrets." There is nothing secret to God, and there can be nothing secret to the God that is revealed in man, by certain processes, and under certain conditions. There is no secret. The Gates are ready to be opened to us all. There can be no exception made to those who enter into these Golden Gates, who have qualified to knock boldly at the Gates. But you have got to get to the

Gates to knock, you have got to climb up the Golden Stairs to knock, you have got to get to the Golden Stairs to climb them, and you have to travel the wilderness path to get to the Golden Stairs. In other words, you will have to *qualify* for permission even to knock at the Gates. You may knock, and knock, and knock until you bruise your knuckles in knocking, but the Gates will never open to anyone but the qualified, the initiated, the true, confirmed and positive disciples of the Path of the Divine Mysteries. We have, in the preceding lectures, been considering the Path in its various aspects. We have been considering, in the first instance, the first necessity involved in starting on the Path —*Self-Abnegation*, or self-non-existence. We have also been studying the " working tools " of the artisan who is labouring to build the temple of God within him—the *Five Valours of a Disciple*. We have also been discussing—last week more especially—the wondrous and sacred fundamental principle of the *Seven Golden Keys of Graduation* in the Path of the Divine Mysteries. To-night we are going to see how those Keys are fabricated for their purpose and use. Fabricated : and you are to be the fabricator. And you cannot fabricate those Keys without the Divine aid and co-operation. Last week that most wondrous Truth was given to us, that there exists in this piece of anatomy that we call our bodies, our personalities, a little minute speck, or atom, a little infinitesimal cell of protoplasm, which we call the Real Self, the True Ego, and everything else but that inchoate entity of the Real, True Ego is false, illusion, earthly, temporal and evanescent. That little Ego is the Divine Principle within us ; not an abstract principle, like a principle of philosophy, but an essence, a personality in itself. The *embryo* of a personality. And the Path of the Divine Mysteries is intended to show, and to bring about in the disciple of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, the perfect process, from beginning to end, of the evolution of that speck of protoplasm from its protoplasmic embryonic form to the height of perfection of an individual and perfected being. You can see,

as I reminded you last week, the enormity of that process, the immensity of it, and that is the whole of "religion." There is no religion but that, and no religion has ever been taught by patriarch, prophet or apostle, and no religion other than this was taught by Jesus Christ—no religion other than the Path of the Divine Mysteries, and the working out, and the instruction of disciples in the working out, of this process of the evolution of the Divine cell buried in the rock of our own human, earthly personality. Therefore, until the start has been made to restore that little speck of the Divine Essence, that little embryo, originally made "in the image and likeness of God," to the "image and likeness of God," to the perfect being, transcending all matter, surmounting all the world, and raised, lifted up, to a seat in the Heavenly Places with Christ in God, we are not on the Path; and no other way of this restoration exists for us, than the Path of the Divine Mysteries.

A thing that most of us have heard and been taught—an event which is generally postponed until some indefinite future period, is what is called the "day of resurrection." The "day of resurrection," which will ultimately take place, of human beings without the flesh, or earth body, has yet to come. But the foretaste of it, its earnest, is for us to attain here, and until we have received this earnest or foretaste, the ultimate "day of resurrection" will never be ours to enjoy or to attain. We shall have forfeited it. We have seen the origin of this composite constitution of the human organism and its corruption, its materialisation, the gross depths of darkness and obliquity into which the organism, made originally "in the image and likeness of God," has sunk, and is sunken to this day. There is no escape from the flesh; there is no escape from matter; there is no escape from this conglomerate of rock, and clay, and dust, and evil, and corruption, that forms the constitution of the human organism; until it has attained to the end of that process which we are discussing and learning in the Path of the Divine Mysteries. You have come—as you have been told,

whether you believe it or not—you have come to this earth not for the first time when you came to this earth this time. All of us, in the days gone by, were born in this earth, in the flesh, in periods when patriarchs and prophets taught and proclaimed the Covenant of God, the Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries ; but they were not obeyed, they were not heeded, they were not hearkened to, and thus said God to us then : " To-day, if you will hear My voice, harden not your hearts." He says it to us again to-day. We did harden our hearts in the past. You do not remember it, but you would not be here, interested in the Truth and the Teaching, if it were not for the fact that you had hardened your hearts beforetime. But the patience and long-suffering of God have endured during the ages of the past, and you have been treated by God as ignorant, stiff-necked and stupid, but not as wilfully rebellious and irretrievably disobedient. There comes a time, however, when disobedience effects its inevitable result in "Reprobation," when the ground of ignorance and stupidity collapses under the feet, and I mistake not when I say, that I think the time has come to-day when mankind is hearing the message of the Path of the Divine Mysteries for the last time, the time when the Truth will utterly remove the plea of ignorance for ever. We have now arrived at a stage of human progress on the one hand, and of retrogression on the other hand, in which the earth is closing itself up, ready to be crumpled up, and there are not lacking many tokens and signs that the end of this present terrestrial state is near at hand ; and knowing as I do that, in the matter of the re-incarnation, as it is sometimes called, or metempsychosis, the return to birth, these transferences of the being do not take place with very frequent repetitions ; that when we pass forth, through the gate of death into the beyond, if we have been doing to our level best that which we have honestly believed to be the right thing to do, however mistaken and wrong it was, God does not visit upon us the result of our ignorance. He does not count it disobedience if we do what we think

it is right to do, and the only thing to be done, however wrong we are in our conception of it, and particularly does He look over, without offence, the wrong actions, the mistaken lives, of those who never had the opportunity of hearing the Truth. Those souls do not pass out into what is called " hell." There is a " hell," but it is not for those who sin ignorantly, but for those who sin consciously, deliberately, rebelliously, transgressingly, against the knowledge of the Divine Covenant. Therefore there are " paradises " according to your evolutionary stage—there is a paradise to which you go, and in which you abide for the length of time which is necessary for you before you are qualified and competent to return again to an earth body. And there is a long passage of time between one re-incarnation and another, in which you reside in this paradise, and then you return to this earth ; not to be restored to the old body of clay you formerly inhabited, but to occupy another one formed in the earth-dust. You must not think that when you pass into this earth you pass into this earth clad in an already prepared earth body, because you do not. You pass into this earth in that spiritual body which was yours when you were in paradise. But when you enter into the organism of your earthly parents, you derive from them a material body, pure and free from corruption in the earliest stages of your conception and birth ; and it is only later on that you draw into your carnate body from the environment in which you live, the corruption, the foulness and the pollution, the Evil, that comes from many sources—from the astral plane, from hell, peopled as it is with denizens of darkness, demons, reprobated people who have passed out from this earth in the ages past, who are running this earth at the present time ; besides from the humanity amongst which we dwell, from the pollutions, the emanations, the vibrations of evil ; from all of which sources we imbibe and draw corruption into our system, whether we will or no. Thus we accumulate within us, in our earth body, and in the particles of our microcosmic body, another

body, a flesh-nature, that spreads itself out like a gangrene, and that body is the only one we are acquainted with in our natural state. And in the interior of our beings lies that inchoate, unborn element, or embryonic entity of our Real Self, the Real Ego, which has to pass forth into an individual existent entity, in due time.

This is what we call the process of "*Re-Generation.*" How utterly mixed up is religion to-day, when they cannot explain "Re-Generation!" It is something so mystifying so perplexing, that nobody of my acquaintance and to my knowledge has given a true explanation of the meaning of Re-Generation. We consider a person to be "regenerated," or to be in the process of being "regenerated," who has "turned over a new leaf." A drunkard who gets sober gets "regenerated" from drunkenness. "Regeneration!" why everyone is trying "re-generation" to-day, in all kinds of nostrums and movements, cults and societies, and crazes; but that is not Re-Generation. If you will only take the word "Re-Generation" literally, you will see it means exactly what it says. *It is a process of bringing to birth.* It means there was a time in the ages of the incalculable past when you were born "*in the image and likeness of God.*" Then you fell from that "image and likeness of God," and became a dead thing. A dead thing is not a lifeless thing; but it is an inanimate thing; it has sunk into inertia; it has sunk into "death," and "death has reigned from Adam to Moses," and from Moses to this day, and we are living in the natural state of "death." "In the midst of life we are in death." Therefore it is essential that there should be Re-Generation. "*Ye must be born again.*" That is what Re-Generation means; literally "*born again.*" It means that we must be born again as we were originally born of God, to reinherit God's Own "image and likeness" (from which our sin disinherited us at the Fall) restored to us, though blurred and clouded by the temporal earth body in which it is clothed, as it must be, even in the most perfectly Re-Generated Initiate of the Divine Mysteries,

whilst in the carnate state. Well, in the covering of that earth body, though in Re-Generation it has been purified of the corrupt matter, yet it still binds us down to this earth planet, in this dark earth state; yet Re-Generation is a real principle, a real experience, a very Divine process, a finality that can never be gainsaid. The process, therefore, is precisely the same, in the Path of the Divine Mysteries—the process of Re-Generation—is precisely *the same as that of ordinary and natural birth, or procreation,* in which the individual organism, or the individual cell that was the one and only organism and entity of the being previous to the accumulation and accretion of the body that we know in this earth plane, quickens, unfolds, evolves, develops, by gradual impregnation of the Divine Essence, the Divine Power, the Divine Love, the Divine Wisdom and the Divine Semination; from being a little tiny speck, it grows and unfolds in the organism, in the being, in the carnate being of this human personality; and, as it grows, it spreads, and enlarges, and expands, until finally it has filled the whole body with itself, and there is not a particle of the body, of what we call the flesh, that is not transmuted by Re-Generation, and transfused with the Divine Elements of Life Eternal. There is not a single atom of the human organism, of this frame of matter, not a particle of matter that is contained in that Re-Generated human organism that is not "Filled with the Fulness of God." And the earth body becomes subordinated to the Spirit, and the organs and senses of the flesh become controlled by the Spirit, and the Spirit is controlled by Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is controlled by God, our Beloved Heavenly Father. What better kind of life could you want than to be under the Divine control, in reality? Not in sing-song, but in reality. We sing:

> "Direct, control, suggest this day,
> All we desire, or do, or say,"

and people sing it, and sing it, while they are laughing in their sleeves all the time, and going out and doing the very

things they prayed God they might not do, contradicting the words of cant they sing. "Control!" No, there is no control of that kind when we are bickering and quarrelling, picking and choosing, one with another. But there comes a time in the process of the Path of the Divine Mysteries—it is a long time ahead after you have begun to walk that Path—when there is an emergence, an emanation, a birth, a natural birth, a procreation, a generation, of that little tiny cell that has grown sufficiently big and strong to be able to push its way out, so to speak, of the old, dark, earthen, material flesh, and becomes *a new-born being. That is Re-Generation.* It is only when we reach a certain stage in the Path of the Divine Mysteries that this begins to take place, because, as you know, in gestation, a long period passes in which there is what is called "*incubation,*" and then follows *maturation*, and then follows the actual *birth* which I think is obstetrically called "*parturition.*" First, *conception*; then *incubation*; then *maturation*; and then *parturition*; and parturition is the end of the Path, so far as the process of Re-Generation is concerned, and the actual event of parturition, or birth of the soul, takes place when the individual Disciple has passed through the Seventh Gate of the Divine Mysteries, and not before.

But when the Disciple has passed through the Seventh Gate of the Divine Mysteries, what kind of an organism is it? Shall I tell you? I want you to listen, because there are one or two here who have passed through the Seventh Gate. Not more than one or two. Plenty of people come to me, thinking they know all. They think they have got it all, and they say: "What a beautiful truth it is—isn't it glorious!" And they begin to presume and pretend—quite unconsciously—that they have passed through the Seventh Gate, and know it all; and I have to laugh in my sleeve, because I know they know nothing. Somebody says: "Don't you think so-and-so has made wonderful advance?" Advance! they have not moved a step yet. It is no good passing our opinion upon our fellow Disciples.

It is no good trying to size up our next-door neighbour, who is somewhere where we are, and nowhere farther. What is the good ? If you will only take your hands and your eyes off everyone else, and study yourself, you will be silent when you think of others. I ask what kind of creature is it that emerges from that process of parturition ? Some of you may not have heard that word before, but consider it as a word to be understood. Look it up in the Dictionary. See what " parturition " means. I ask, what is that kind of a creature ? You do not remember it—of course you do not,—but when you were born, the moment you came from your mother's womb, what sort of creature were you ? In the first place, you were absolutely *dependent*, not only on your mother, but on your father also, and on the conditions in which you were born, and the environment into which you came. You were dependent on all manner of things. The nurse, when the baby comes out of the womb, has to slap the little babe, in order to teach it how to breathe. The child would be asphyxiated if it did not breathe for itself, and so the nurse slaps it to make it cry. And then it cries, and draws a breath, and that is the first breath of life that that baby draws. I think we have got to be slapped many times in order for us to take our first breath of life on the Path. It is hard work to be a nursing father or a nursing mother, bringing up " babes " in the Ek-Klesia. They have got to be slapped, otherwise they would be suffocated with their own ignorance, and their own foolishness, and their own stupidity. Again, that little tiny thing is *helpless*. It cannot walk ; it cannot even crawl. And yet I have met some people who, when they have gone through the Seventh Gate, think they can " jump over a five-barred gate." I have known some people who, when they have passed through the Seventh Gate, think they can go on the platform, and teach their leaders, and instruct those who have been instrumental in their parturition. Would you ask a tiny-new-born babe to jump over a five-barred gate ? Would you ask a little babe of that size to eat ? It has not got any

teeth to eat with. To drink? Well, it can suck, but you have to teach it where to suck from. You see how stupidly ignorant and helpless a baby is. But the most particular phenomenon about "new-born babes" upon the Path of the Divine Mysteries, as illustrated by the babe just born, is that it is absolutely *unprotected*. It has not even got fur to protect it from the cold, like some creature-babes have. If they are chickens, they have got to be put in an incubator or brooder, or they have to be closely covered by the mother-hen's feathers, to be kept warm. And that is the case with the child of God; that is the case with the Initiate who has passed through the Seven Golden Gates. That is as far as they can get, they are only beginning to learn how to breathe, how to eat, how to drink, how to work, how to think, and how to move at all. So when you get to that stage, don't ever think you have gone very far, because you have only just begun. All the rest has been preliminary, embryonic, incubatory and conceptual, and nothing more than that. Is it a wonder that there are so many egoists in the world to-day? People who have gone ahead of themselves to such an extent that they think they are everything, when they are nothing.

Now we will just study these Seven Golden Gates, in a very cursory and superficial way, because I cannot go into the depths with you on such an occasion as this. It is supposed, therefore, that you have reached the stage when, having taken the first Step of Self-Abnegation, you are really on the Path; that you have heard "Mr Interpreter" as "Christian" did when he got out of the "Slough of Despond," pointing to that little "wicket gate" in the far distance, telling him to walk to that gate. You have heard the same "Mr Interpreter." You are listening to him now. You are listening to "Mr Interpreter" all the time, because it is not the man who is talking to you, but it is the God through him who is talking to you. That is why I said that to-night we should "take off our shoes because we are treading on holy ground"; that we should be reverent;

that we should be solemn ; that we should consider it a sacred matter. We have visualised the progress of the Path up to the present moment. We have gone through that Strait Gate of Self-Abnegation—I am speaking hypothetically, by way of argument—but granted that, what then ? That Step of Self-Abnegation is the *crux*. But I must not stop to say more about that. I have got to go further. But I do not want you to think, because I go further, and speak of the higher stages, that I am leading you to assume that you have gone farther than the Step of Self-Abnegation, or even that you have gone farther than simply accepting the Principle of Self-Abnegation, by Faith. Because it is a long and weary journey, is this Path that leads even to the Step of Self-Abnegation. It is a hard journey. But having passed through the Strait Gate, and started on the Narrow Way that stretches beyond it, it is a strenuous journey, it is a hard Path. Well, suppose we have presumably reached the First Gate, and we will picture the disciple, having struggled so far as that First Gate, weary, footsore, ragged, and he knocks. Because he has got that far, he is qualified to knock. He has gone through the Strait Gate, he has travelled that distance on the Narrow Way, and therefore he is qualified to knock. God opens the door and says " Come in," and that is the First Initiation. And what is this First Initiation ?

The First Initiation is the Initiation of what is sometimes called " *the Baptism of John* "—that is, of John the Baptist —or the " *Baptism of Water*." That is only a symbolical term, defining or symbolising the initial process of Birth or Re-Generation. It has been materialised in a variety of ways, as, for instance, in what is called " baptismal regeneration." The fallacy of that theory is that, when the water has been sprinkled upon the child, or the child, or adult, has been dipped in the water, that at that moment " regeneration " has taken place effectively and completely, and the only thing afterwards for that child is to be brought up in the " Most Holy Faith," to be taken to Church to

" hear sermons," " repeat the Lord's Prayer," the " Ten Commandments," and the " Apostles' Creed," " in the vulgar tongue," and to live a good life. And then there comes the time of " Confirmation," and after " Confirmation " he is permitted to go to what is called " Holy Communion." It is nothing more than the materialised fallacy of the teaching of God's Truth. First of all, " baptism " is a word which means exactly what everybody says it means—*immersion*, dipping in water. That is all it means. And naturally, of course, the Devil will get in there and say, " Well, let us get water and dip them in," and so they get water and they pass certain words over that water, and make the sign of the Cross, and then that is holy water. And the teaching is that that water is impregnated with some gas, or spirit, which they call " the Holy Spirit." I am putting it very roughly. Of course theologians would not acknowledge this. They would say, " Oh, no, that is not what we teach." I do not know about that. At any rate, it is the inference that is conveyed to most minds by it, so that ignorant people, when they get home after a baptism, and they are asked where they have been, say, " We have taken the baby to Church to get *done*." That is the way ignorant people talk when speaking about baptism. We will leave it at that. It absolutely means *immersion*; but what does the " water " mean? If you take a Cruden's Concordance, and look up the term " water," you will find it is nearly always used, and in some passages it is expounded as being symbolical of the *Logos—the Word of God*. Now, the word " Logos " does not mean simply expressions, in language, of God, because if that were the case all sermons about God would be the *Logos*. It does not mean teaching about God, because if that were so all the theological treatises we have in the different libraries would be the *Logos*. It is something very much greater than that. You do not need to have the Word, the Logos, in the vernacular. You may be dumb, so that you cannot use words at all, and you may not have an idea in your mind, and yet you may have the *Logos*.

The *Logos* is not the words of God; it is the Word of God. And the Word is that by which God manifests Himself and gives to those to whom He sends it. It is the dynamic Mind and Thought of God, and when we come to study this from a scientific aspect, we shall see that the Mind of God, and the Word of God, are not spoken words, not uttered words, nor written words, but they are the substantial effluence of the Thought of God. There is a truth in the expression, "thoughts are things." That idea is materialised in the present day, but it just means that there is, emanating from God, and drawn by the faith of the Divine Spirit in the individual on this earth, a flow, a stream of Living Water, Water of Life, Life-Giving Water; and that is the substantial form, in essence, of the Mind of God, that is like the *semen* that fertilises the *ovum*, and brings life to that *ovum*. That is the First Divine Mystery. There is a good deal more attaching to it which I am not going to give you to-night. Do not forget, I am just giving you a little opening, that you may be able to see there is something to do, and if you follow the Teaching, and closely study and meditate upon it, and give your whole soul and mind and body to it, the time will come when you will find out what the "Baptism of John" means. The time will come when you will know what the "Baptism of Water" is. It is a Spiritual concept, it is a Divine inpouring, it is a Heavenly conception, it is the most glorious and the most mysterious transaction, and the most wonderful change that can possibly take place in any organism, because it is the beginning of the New Birth, it is the beginning of Re-Generation.

The Second Golden Gate is again the *Gate of Baptism. It is the Baptism of Fire.* It is that which is expressed so wonderfully, in descriptive fashion, in the 2nd chapter of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, with reference to the Day of Pentecost. It is the Fire of the Holy Spirit of God, descending and lighting upon the disciple, so that the hidden, buried organism, the cell within, the True Ego, is vivified by the Divine Heat, the Divine Fire, the Fire of the Divine

Essence itself. But then, of course, there is another aspect, too, of these Divine Mysteries, and I must not omit to present that aspect to you. It is this. There is always, in each of these seven distinct processes of Re-Generation a negative aspect. I have just given you the positive aspect of these two. The negative aspect, or process, that takes place in Re-Generation has to do with the body, the flesh-body, the earth-body, and therefore, in the Baptism of Water —the Logos of God—the purifying process begins to take place in the body. Water has a wonderful power in it of softening, as well as of hardening. If you pour water on certain substances that are hard—stone, clay, or chalk—it melts them, it dilutes them, it dissolves them, as salt crystals may be dissolved in water. And the crystallisation of the body is dissolved in the *Baptism of the Water of the Logos of God*, and the body becomes a solution, so that the hard cake, the hard crust of the old self-matter, ceases to be an obstruction, it becomes plastic, not only to the growth of the soul, or the Spirit within; but it also ceases to be, partially at any rate, an obstruction to the effluence, or the penetration, of the Divine Spirit from without, and therefore the Divine Spirit from without, descending from God, may pass through this de-materialised substance, which we call matter, and penetrate into the deeper recesses of the organism. This *Baptism of Water* is the preparation for the *Baptism of Fire*. The body is put under a certain treatment, a chemical treatment, a transmutatory treatment, the transmutation of the chemical crystallisation of the earth-body, so that it becomes semi-dissolved. It is no longer the opaque, dense, hard substance it was, that prevented the Spirit interpenetrating it, and thus preventing the organism from becoming vitalised and growing. That is what takes place. Nothing less and nothing more than that, because the Second Mystery is that which I described as the interpenetration of the Spirit of God into the being, through solution, or dissolved crystallisation of the body, caused by immersion in the "Water of the Logos." It was possible

then for the Spirit to penetrate where it was not possible for it to do so before. The flesh was too hard, too encased, too encrusted, too wrapped up with itself, too concentrated on itself, that the Spirit had not a chance to drop its Essence into the soul. That is the case with us all, until we reach that stage of Baptism in the Logos of God. I know how hard it is to be "religious" in this world to-day. We go here, and there, and everywhere, trying to find out some means by which we can get true religion, and find God. We cannot find God. Why cannot we find God? Because we are hermetically sealed against God. That is why we find people rushing here, there, and everywhere. The "New Thought" people get crowds, the "Spiritualists" get crowds, the Churches get crowds, the Salvation Army gets crowds, and all these crowds of people are saying, "Tell us how to find God!" And everyone does, to the limit of their knowledge, try to tell them how to find God. But they do not know how themselves. They have got all sorts of "gods," but they have not been able yet to tell anybody how to find GOD. I am so sorry, because how lovely it would be if all these dear, good people, who are hurrying around seeking for God, would only listen to the Truth of the Path of the Divine Mysteries! They would then find God. But they are finding music gods, luxury gods, false gods, and do you think God is going to be offended with them because they are doing that? No. But, when the Truth is given to them, if they refuse the Truth, and say, "I prefer my 'spirits,' I prefer that dear 'spirit' who comes to me and tells me such beautiful things, such wonderful things, and reveals things to me; that is my god, and I am not going to listen to this man who tells me there is only One God, in Heaven." People say, "Do you really believe in a personal God?" And they are surprised when I say "Yes." Why, I have *seen* Him, and you cannot take that away from me. "What our eyes have seen, what our ears have heard, and our hands have handled of the Word of God" (the Logos), that we can honestly and fearlessly declare to you, whether

you believe it or not. That is what happens in the Baptism of John, in the Baptism of Water. So dissolved is it that the Spirit of God can pour into it. That is the beginning of Re-Generation, that is the moment of conception, that is the beginning of gestation, that is the beginning of that process of fertilisation of the seed that I have spoken of, the original protoplasm, the True Self, *in embryo.*

Then the Second Baptism, you see, is the Baptism of Fire, and it is too wonderful for me to say much about it. I must ask you to forgive me for being very brief and cursory in this statement. The Baptism of Fire is the *descent of the Holy Ghost.* What do I mean by that—the descent of the Holy Ghost ? What is the Holy Ghost ? That question has baffled theologians for centuries. What is the Holy Ghost ? Is it a person ? As much a personality, distinct from the personality of the Father, as I am distinct from you ? Oh, no. It does not mean that. The word "*persona*" is a Latin word. It is a word that is used in ancient drama, and we derive from it the word "personify." For instance, Irving personified Mephistopheles. He personified him. It is a term given to distinguish a certain principle, a certain thought, a certain idea. But there is something more than idea about the Holy Ghost. We are told, and correctly, that the Holy Spirit "*proceeds from the Father and the Son.*" True. It is therefore a Living Power, a Life-Stream of God, passing through the duct of the Great Master, and passing from the Great Master, the Only-Begotten Son of God, to wherever there is the attraction for it to be drawn by. Now the attraction for it to be drawn by is the Spirit in the Soul of man ; that Spirit that has at last got released, so to speak, that has at last got an opportunity, a chance, and it cries out in its inchoate form ; it cries out, stretches out, and draws from the Great Master, the Lord Jesus Christ—draws the Holy Spirit, the Divine Essence into it, and that is the actual act of *conception,* when the God, "*the Power of the Highest overshadows*" the incarnated speck of Himself in the individual living organism—"*the Power of the Highest over-*

shadows" the parents, the Body and Soul of the Disciple, and "*that holy thing*" that is conceived, is "*conceived of the Holy Ghost.*" That is the inception of the New Birth.

But then that is only the Second Mystery, and I cannot dwell further upon it, although it is a very wonderful subject. What is the Third Mystery? We call it the Mystery of Passion. When in the symbolism of the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, it was a reality that Jesus Christ was "*conceived by the Holy Ghost,*" in the conjugation of His earthly parents. What does the Creed say next? You see I am quoting the Apostles' Creed in quite an "orthodox" manner. It says "*Born of the Virgin Mary*"—"*Maria.*" What does the word "*Maria*" mean? It means "bitterness," weeping, tears, *passion.* There is a Mystery in itself—*the Mystery of Passion*—suffering. I do not mean suffering in this world. That is not what I mean at all. We know that we all have our own quota of pain and suffering, trials and illnesses and diseases and aches, and all the gamut of suffering. Has not this world had plenty of it during the past few years? Is it not having a great amount of it today? It makes one's heart ache. But that is not what is meant here. It is Passion—secret suffering, secret torture, that is absolutely inexplicable, that belongs only to the disciples of the Path of the Divine Mysteries in the Life of the Path. It is the suffering of *bringing to birth.* It is nothing more nor less than the "*Travail*" *of the soul.* It is the *pains of child-birth.* Do not ask me to describe it, because it is impossible to describe it. No mother dare or can possibly even describe the pains of child-birth, and certainly no disciple can pass from his lips, or her lips, any form of expression that gives a clear notion or conception of what this Passion—the "*Maria*"—is. That is the Third Mystery. It is the *Mystery of the Travail,* the *Mystery of Child-Birth,* going on in the disciple, in the gestatory stage of the Re-Generation of the Spirit, the Christ Within. I do not know that there is any greater ecstasy in human experience than the ecstasy of a pure, loving, sweet, woman

mother, who endures travail in birth. She will endure a thousand degrees more of that suffering and pain, with the prospect which is to come of bringing forth the child of her heart's desire. And I say that the compensations, the consolations, that come to the disciple in the intensest moments of that "Travail," are greater by a thousandfold than the Travail itself, and we would not avoid it. We would not run away from it. We will welcome it, because it is the harbinger of the ultimate state of Re-Generation to which we are gradually making our way.

Then we come to the *Fourth Mystery—the Mystery of Death.* Now, when we come to the Fourth Mystery, a wonderful thing follows; the next Three Mysteries that follow come directly one after the other. There is practically no interval, or very little interval between them. What is this "*Death*?" This "Death" appertains more particularly to the old self, to the body. It is the bringing into effect of actuality and reality of the real state and meaning of *self-non-existence.* We can afford to be non-self-existent, for there is something else which begins to exist instead of it. Ask any mother which she would prefer—any good mother, any true-hearted, loving mother—to die herself in child-birth, in order that the child might live, or to let the child die, that she might live—ask her what she would prefer. I am sure the majority of women would say, "Let me die that my child may live." That is precisely what we are up against when we are actually entering upon those stages, the realisation of the Step of Self-Abnegation. When the mother consents to become a mother, that mother knows something of the dangers that follow in the process of becoming a mother—that it is quite possible death may ensue; that it is taking a very vital risk. What does that mother say? "Oh, yes, I will take the chances of life or death." That is what the disciple says, "I will take the chances of death," and when the act of parturition does take place in women, they do literally, if they have any consciousness at all, enter into the valley of the shadow of death, because there is no more

serious stage in human life than that particular stage of child-birth. Then we have chosen it. We have chosen to die, that we may live. And what is it that dies? Every bit of you that you think and thought was *you* in the past; the sum-total of yourself; that busy self, that business self, all the different kinds of self as you are; the big admixture of selves that makes up your little puny personality. That has got to die. Are you willing for it to die? What a test question that is. "What," said a woman in New York, when I was talking in this way, as she was going out, shrugging her shoulders, "Do you think I am going to give up my personality?" But you have got to do it. And look here, you have not to give up your personality, your personality will give you up. It is the body that dies. It is the body of the mother that dies, that gives up the child. It is not the child that gives up the mother that dies. Therefore what are you doing? You are simply submitting to the giving up of you by yourself. Is not that a paradox? It is exactly what takes place. You have built up for yourself a social position, a religious reputation, an educational career, a political status, and all these things. Or you may not have done anything of the sort. You may have been a failure, when you had ambitions to be otherwise. You like houses and lands, and perhaps you have succeeded in accumulating them. You like jewels and furs. You like people to think and speak nicely about you. You like to get up in the morning to read your newspaper. You like to have money to spend, and everything of that sort. That is part of your life, part of your personality. It is nothing else than the emanations, or the expressions, of your own self, and are you willing for those to go? Now I am asking you this question. If you are willing for the personality, the body, the accumulations of your traits and tricks and mannerisms, and idiosyncrasies, and ambitions, and everything that belongs to you, and your consciousness, to give you up, to let you go—Are you willing to submit to that? If your teacher were to point out to you a defect in your

character, if your teacher, or your master were to say, "Now, you are far too talkative, you are far too fussy, you are far too inquisitive, you are far too gossipy,"—if an ordinary man were to say these things to an ordinary woman, that ordinary woman would be extraordinarily angry. Supposing you met some of the disciples on the Path of the Divine Mysteries, and they did not take any notice of you; would you go away and say, "I do not think much of the Path of the Divine Mysteries?" Would you be willing to let go yourself, so that you would stand those corrections and reproofs that you are bound to get from the Master? Would you be able to stand it, silently, humbly, and submissively, if rebuked and reproved by those you see, and those whom you do not see—who point out the defects in your character, and the wrongs in your make-up, that perhaps you have never thought of nor discovered before? I tell you, death is a terrible thing on the Path of the Divine Mysteries, and I do not ask you to come to that stage, and you will never be allowed to come to it, before you are ready for it. Therefore it amounts to this, that the Mystery of Death is the Mystery of actually bringing to birth, of the actual process of bringing to birth; when you are just willing to die, in order that the child may live.

Now the next Mystery is the *Mystery of Burial.* And with the Mystery of Burial there is another Mystery that is cognate with it. It is, the *Mystery of the Descent into Hell,* or Hades. That is a very solemn one. The Mystery of Burial is the elimination of the body. Its complete elimination for ever, its disintegration in the soil of the earth from which it came. Then there is a Descent into Hades. I am going to ask you this question: Who descends into Hades? Not the body, not the clay body. It cannot get there. That descends into the ground: "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." But what part of you goes into Hades? Why, it is the "new-born babe" that goes into Hades; the "child" goes into Hades. And what does it do there?—that poor little, helpless thing—does it travel

around in the atmosphere of Hades? It does not mean that in a literal sense, but it means that you will, the day that you have been "crucified with Christ," pass through, and overcome the powers of the "spiritual wickednesses" in those astral places. It means that from the hour of your death and New Birth, if you remain faithful, using your Five Valours—from that hour, the Devil has no more dominion over you, Hell cannot prevail against you. So that you may go through the darkest and most demoniacal places of the earth, you may be assaulted by all the worst fiends of Hell, the most deceiving "spirits" that assail mankind, but they will not be able to prevail against you. They will not be able to touch you. They may afflict the body, they may bring distress and pain to you, they may bring the most terrific tests to you—trials and temptations and afflictions—but they will pass over you. You will have gone into Hades, and fought the Devil, with all his hosts of angels and disincarnate "spirits." That is Burial, and the Soul's Descent into Hades.

Then what next? You come back. You "rise again," and that is the *Resurrection, the Sixth Mystery.* Your body rises from Death, as well as your soul. Do not forget it, it is the *Resurrection of the body* that you receive. Not the "resurrection of the body" that most people imagine, because there is no such thing as a "resurrection body," as some people think. We shall only have the eternal Spiritual Body in the final "day of resurrection"; but when we emerge from Hades we get a *Resurrection body.* The Resurrection body, as you know in the case of Jesus Christ, was a tangible body. It could eat, and it could drink—it could eat fish, at any rate. It was a body like yours and mine, with all the peculiarities of recognition, with certain differences of transmutation in that body which will mark that it has passed through the Seventh Mystery. I have seen brethren who have passed through the Seventh Mystery, especially when they have advanced further along in the Seventh Mystery, and passed further degrees in that

School, who became valiant, whose faces have changed, whose physiognomy has altered, whose texture of skin and flesh has changed, whose blood has changed corpuscularly. That is always the case with those who pass through the Seventh Mystery, after a certain period when they have become acclimatised to the Higher Ether of the Seventh Heaven. That is the Resurrection Life, and that is the Life of the Initiate on the earth. I will tell you what kind of a Life it is. You can go through stone walls, and locked doors. I do not mean this literally, but there is no obstacle on this earth that you cannot surmount. The Resurrection Life is a glorious Life of Triumph and Success and Victory over all the powers of Hell. The Resurrection Life is the Life in which we walk no longer in the flesh to fulfil the desires thereof, but we Walk in the Spirit. That is the Mystery of Resurrection.

Then follows the *Mystery of the Ascension*, and that is the Seventh Mystery. That Mystery, my brethren, is one of the sublimest experiences that the mind can ever realise. It is painted in wonderfully powerful language in the New Testament. St. Paul speaks of it as being "*Hid with Christ in God.*" In another place he speaks of being "*seated with Christ in the Heavenly Places.*" And many more passages have the same meaning and reference. I cannot go into that. It is too wondrous, it is too ineffable. That is the Seventh Mystery, the Mystery of the perfect *Divine Union*; of the "*Divine Marriage,*" in which there is no separation between you, in this world, in the flesh, and God in Heaven. That is the "Divine Union." It is such a Divine Union that, when you reach a certain stage in the Seventh Mystery, you attain to a consciousness in which you "*know no man after the flesh,*" and even you "*know not Jesus Christ after the flesh.*" And He smiles at you, does Jesus Christ, the Great Master, when you say, "I want Communion with God our Heavenly Father." And so Jesus gets out of the way, and says, "All right, you are with Me, hid with Me in God." And after that, your Union and Fellowship is not with the

Saints only, not with the Angels only, not with Jesus Christ the Son of God ascended only, but also with God, your Heavenly Father. The Great Master has brought you to God, and His loving prayer to the Father is fulfilled : " *That they all may be One ; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us. And the glory which Thou hast given Me, I have given unto them ; that they may be One, even as We are One ; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be Perfected into the One Being* "—*the One Entity.* This is the Consummation of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, the ever-abiding " Sabbath," the " Rest," after the end of the Labours ; the " Seventh Day " of Re-Generation—*Ascension,* the Seventh Divine Mystery.

SECOND LECTURE COURSE

LECTURE I

THE MICROCOSM—(1)

I HAVE not the slightest notion of the message which the Great Master has for me to give you to-night, but I do know this: I am quite conscious of the fact that you are very ignorant people. Now that is not a very flattering remark. I know that you know considerably more than I do of most matters that have to do with technical life in this world. I am sure every one of you would beat me in "turning an honest penny," or perhaps a "dishonest" one. I know you are smart, clever, business-like, or that you are well-educated. I do not pretend to be "well-educated," and I am not a scholar in the University sense of the word. I never took a degree in my life. I scamped through college, had three years' theological training, and never learned a thing there. So you see I am not an "educated" person in the sense we understand when we speak of culture. Whatever I know, I have picked up, and God has taught me. Therefore, when I said you were ignorant, I did not mean you were so on the practical, material, or intellectual side of life, but I do say you are very ignorant people as regards the Divine Philosophy, that wonderful process, that wonderful work, the *opus operatum* of Re-Generation, of the Sacred Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries. And on that account, during these lectures, and also at the classes, I am going to take up the subject of the microcosm, of the actual constitution of the human organism, so that you may understand a little of what is meant by, "*Man, know thyself.*" That is a phrase that was used in ancient days, in Greek and

Egyptian and all early philosophy. It was a phrase that was well understood by the Jews and the Gentiles in the days of Jesus and of the Apostles. It is a phrase that was on the lips of the prophets of the Old Testament. It is a phrase that was the slogan of the spiritual life and philosophy of the earth for ages and ages, and it is to-day the great slogan of mystical philosophy, East and West. It is a phrase that was constantly used by Plato in his teaching, the Platonists, the Neo-Platonists, and the Gnostics, who all loved the word. I love the word, but I do not always use it. I want to explain that word to-night—"*Man, know thyself.*" That means, not merely that you have got to understand all those little nasty traits of character that belong to your human personality. I know they are there, and probably you know they are there, but it does not mean the examination of your character, or conduct and thoughts, so that you may know how frail and weak you are, and how uninformed and easily led astray you are, and all the weaknesses of the human flesh. That is not what is meant. Of course it includes that. That is a very important item in what is called, "The culture of self-knowledge." The real culture of self-knowledge is to know yourself constitutionally, to diagnose, to analyse your very complex being. That does not mean merely to know and to analyse those fields of sensibility, those areas of consciousness, of feeling, and of thought, that appertain solely to the flesh, to the human of you. That is very easy to do. Any priest will tell you how to do that, especially at this time of the year. But that is not more than the surface, the superficies of the science of self-knowledge. Again, in the culture of self-knowledge, not only do you have to understand the philosophy and psychology of the deeper ramifications or strata of your constitution which belong to the Spiritual plane mostly, but you also have to understand the *history* of yourself; because, if you do not know the history of yourself, you cannot very successfully diagnose your constitution, or analyse your personality or individuality. History is a very

important factor in self-knowledge. I am not going to dwell on the history to-night. I hope on a future occasion to take up the subject of the history of the human organism; but to-night I am going to give you a general outline of the analysis of the human microcosm. We have got to begin from the outside, because otherwise we shall get confused.

First of all, there is what we call the body, the *earth body*. I am going to say two or three words about that earth body. It is the only part of you which you know or cognise in the natural earth-life. It is the only part of you which you have any acquaintance with until you come into touch with the Teaching of the Divine Mysteries. It is that part of you which physically hears, sees, smells, moves, works, does, thinks, and knows. It is the part of you that is actuated by the brain. That is that peculiar mystery which some people call "genius," which really is rather an inflation of the brain, which created the "genius" in some people, so that they develop very marked characteristics, with an extended capacity on one line or on another. But it all belongs to the earth body; it has nothing to do with anything else, with anything higher than earth. Now I am going to take the risk of offending you for all time, in speaking of the word "genius," and the idea of "genius." I am going to tell you what "genius" is. You may not believe me, and I do not care whether you do or not. But it is this, "*Genius*" is a Latin word, with its Greek equivalent, "Demon," and you know that the ancient Greeks and the ancient Latins used that word a great deal, but they used the word "genius" as a personality, and not as a characteristic. The "*genii*" were what were anciently called "gods." They are the "gods" that were spoken and sung of by Ovid, Homer, and the other poets of the Classical Period. And who were these "*genii*"? I invite you to find out for yourself. Look up Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, and look up Smith's Classical Dictionary, and you will find the words "genii" and "demons" respectively, and you will find what they mean. The "*genii*" were "*spirits*"

of immense capacity, power, knowledge and understanding, of a complete acquaintance with the "Magic" that prevailed in those early ages, psychic forces of a very powerful kind, and when they "passed out"—vulgarly speaking, when they "died"—they left their bodies on the earth, and they are in the Astral Plane now, in the psychical or astral body. They are the same old fellows that the Greeks used to worship as their "gods," and that the Romans used to worship and propitiate. They were memorialised in the great Pantheon of Rome in those days—images moulded and sculptured in representation of, and in honour to, those "gods." And there is not a thing that operates in the average human mind, in the un-regenerated, the un-spiritual human mind—there is nothing that man attains to, or accomplishes, in the way of "genius," or achievement, in the earth plane, that is not through "spirit" inspiration of the "genii," "demons," or "gods" of the firmament. There is a brother whom you see on the platform here sometimes, who is a well-known, a skilful, and a successful engineer and inventor. I am not going to sing his praises, and tell you what he has invented, but he is the inventor of some of the most important details in motor transport, that are working to-day in all the motor transport of the world. Well, he has come to the realisation that his genius of engineering and invention is not God-given, but it is devil-given, it proceeds from the "genii," or "demons." But mark you, everything is demoniacal in this world—poetry, arts, crafts, drama, music, etc. But it is no disparagement to the accomplishments of those who are working under the inspiration of these "genii." It could not be otherwise, because we are living in an abnormal state, in which everything is abnormal; even the potatoes you eat at dinner are abnormal, and your plants are abnormal, and your nose is abnormal—everything you touch, and taste, and see, and hear is abnormal. Therefore, in the condition of abnormality we have to put up with the abnormal conditions, the limitations, and the dependences upon forces that we deprecate, but which we

are obliged to use. No one likes the steam engine. It is a horrid thing, and if you have an artistic temperament you object to the steam engine; but we have to use the steam engine all the time, or the electrical appliances. We are in this world of abnormality, and we have an abnormal constitution that corresponds to the abnormal constitution of the earth, and as that abnormal constitution is enveloped by the abnormal constitution of the air, and as the abnormal constitution of the air is the only place beyond the earth that excarnate spirits can reside in, after they pass out of this earth, there they live in the Astral Plane. It is exactly the same life in character as the life on the earth plane—only with a difference of corporeal constitution and form. Instead of the earthly material body, they have the astral, the atmospheric, or psychic body. If you have been a philanthropist here, you will be a philanthropist there; if you have been a Church parson here, you will be a Church parson there; if you have been an inventing engineer here, you will be an inventing engineer there,—if you die unregenerated, or a wilful unbeliever. All is exactly the same, only you have changed your constitution, as you divest yourself of your overcoat, or your khaki; and now you are living in a world in which you do not require "khaki," because the elements are different. But you have another body, suited to the astral elements. These, therefore, are the "*genii*," the "*demons*," of various characteristics, capacities and powers, and they are under one great Ruler, sometimes called Satan, or Beelzebub, and so on, who is a real personality, the supreme being ruling in the air over this earth-sphere of activity and motion and thought. And all the thought that comes from the brain, all the energy that comes from the nervous system, all the achievements of men in literature, science, invention, art, and everything else, are given to them by these wonderful beings, the "*genii*," which, in days gone by, they worshipped knowingly as the "gods," and whom men worship and serve to-day, without knowing that they are worshipping or serving the "demon-Gods."

That does not disparage man at all, or the genius of man at all. The artist is artistic, and he is the artist by reason of the "*genii*" who give him the artistry. All power to the elbow of the one who succeeds in his art or craftsmanship. I do not disparage that sort of thing at all, but I know where it comes from.

Well, the earth body is that which we have to do with on this earth, and we have to become very much better acquainted with it than at present, because that earth body has to be very definitely and drastically treated. It has to be passed through a severe crucible; that crucible which I was speaking of one night last week. That is the earth body; it belongs to this earth. I said it before, and I say it again to you, that when a Spirit from Heaven, from Paradise, returns to the earth in order to complete its predestined course of Re-Generation, it returns into a pretty hard place. It returns an absolutely pure Spirit, and it passes into the organism through its parents, and it partakes of a body that the parents give it. Then it is passed forth into the world of individual being, and, with the exception of that little modicum of matter contained in the body, that babe is absolutely pure. There is not a speck of hell, or earth, or flesh, or corruption in it. Then what takes place? That body that the child inherits from its parents is made of matter, made of dust, the "dust of the earth," clay, chalk, and minerals, with component electric and magnetic forces and elements, which are purely of the earth. "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," says the Old Book. Well, immediately that little organism emerges, it begins to take the air, to breathe the atmosphere, and eat and drink of food of this earth, and the earth and atmosphere are composed of an infinite variety of deleterious and poisonous elements, the exhalations and emanations of unseen "spirits," and the exhalations and emanations of all the people living in the world, and of the decayed bodies of the earth, and it partakes also of the irresistible force of attraction of the aura of evil embodied in the earth and air. These all

pass in with every vibration, every breath, every pulsation, of every organism that has life. That is the kind of air that the poor little devoted creature has to breathe, and the kind of food that the poor little devoted child has to partake of, in order to make that earth body grow. Therefore it gets harder, and harder, and harder, and tougher, and tougher, and tougher; before the time the child has grown to be a man or woman, there is not much of the purity of the little babe left. It is all buried deep down in the adamantine rock of the earth body. He is a "cave-man" in his own earth body. That is man in the earth body; but make no mistake, if you have incarnated from Paradise (yea, if you have incarnated from the Astral Plane, in many cases, thank God), there is that little speck which is your real organism, which has to grow and develop, which has to quicken and evolve and be born. It has to go through those four processes I spoke of last week—conception, incubation, maturation, and parturition, and then comes birth, and "growth into Christ," "unto the measure of the stature of the full age of Christ," which is the process of Re-Generation in the Path of the Divine Mysteries. And nothing else in this world can be substituted for the Path of the Divine Mysteries. You may say, "Have I not, in Thy Name, cast out demons, healed the sick, visited the poor, and done all these beautiful deeds in my life?" And the Master will then say, "Depart from Me, I do not know you." Why? Because, naturally, in this abnormal life the poor little thing is in the earth body, which is the vehicle of astral motion, energy, and action, and the body is the receptacle, the engine, the instrument, the vehicle of the demoniacal "*genii*," astral "*genii*." And there are "good genii" and "bad genii," according to the world's estimation of these qualities. There are some "*genii*" that occupy some bodies and drive those bodies to murder, cruelty, brutality, robbery, drunkenness, debauchery, and hypocrisy, and everything that the world, in its standards of morality, calls wrong and bad. Then there are some other

"*genii*," from the same source, that make men politicians, literary men, poets, musicians, artists, preachers, philanthropists, etc., purely according to the bent of their earthly begotten nature. It is purely according to the innate bent of your earthly begotten nature, inherited from parental ancestry, and induced by your environment. If you have inherited a body from your parents with properties derived from past ancestors of those parents, of nervous capacity, or physical capacity, mental or psychic capacity, for certain particular lines of thought, attainment and achievement, the "*genii*" in the Astral Plane will use that capacity, and turn you out the finished article to the best of their power, and of your correspondence to your earthly environment and astral attraction and affinity, and they will give you your heart's desire. If you have a business mentality, the business "*genii*" will help you, and if you have no business mentality, you will not get their help. There are so many things that belong to "accident," and events, and occurrences of life, that have never been foreseen; but there is a pre-destiny that takes charge of God's Own Elect especially and always. I mean by that, that it does not matter what kind of a person you have been in your last incarnation. You might have been a worshipper of demons, or of wood and stone; you might have been everything that was wrong, foolish, and contrary to the Truth; but you did your best. You did all you knew how, in the light you had. You might have been a cannibal, a head hunter, and you might have done that with all your power, because you thought it was the right thing to do. If so, you will not go into the astral plane; you will go to the Paradise that belongs to you in Heaven, that "Home" that is waiting for you. But supposing someone came along and said, "Don't you know, you are wrong? that it is bad, that kind of life? There is a higher life for you to live than hunting heads? Just think what is inside that brain of yours. Think what skilful hands you have got." And you say "No, I prefer head hunting." Then you are sinning

against the light, and do you think you will go to Heaven then? No, you will stop in the astral plane, where head hunting will be with you. You will go where the head hunters go. The earth body, therefore, is the thing that has first to be treated. But I want to go farther than the earth body. What is that influence—call it force or anything you like—that energy that causes the potential child of God to fulfil its destiny in any particular degree of its æonial fulfilment? What is it that does that, so that it may live its life, however ignorantly, and wrongly, and abnormally, not knowing anything better, and not having any higher law to instruct it, and therefore it lives to the best of its power, even though it might be a Robespierre with his malignant tendencies—I am not meaning to say that Robespierre was one of those to whom I refer as the Elect, because I have no information about it; what is that power that enables the potential and æonial child of God, that secret, hidden power that guides and protects the æonial child of God incarnate on this earth who does not know a thing, who has not the privilege of hearing the Divine Mysteries and the Truth, who has been left in a state of ignorance and superstition, and even of barbarism; what is it that raises that soul, that preserves that soul, and takes it where it goes afterwards, to Paradise, and brings it to this world again to another life higher in ratio of development, an environment more favourable, and therefore with a capacity to correspond more wisely to this wider environment; what is it? It is not the astral "*genii*." It is God's Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit of God. It is God's Own Spirit, that broods over this world, and wherever there is the Spirit unextinguished in the Soul of any individual organism, man or beast—I am not forgetting the beasts, for they have got the same kind of soul that a man has—the Holy Spirit of God hovers around, broods over the face of this vast deep, of air, *genii*, demons, mankind, pollution and corruption; and wherever there is a single organism living incarnate on this earth that has a Spirit of its own corre-

sponding to the Holy Spirit of God, the unextinguished and unquenched Spirit, though an embryo Spirit, an unborn thing, a mere "*is*"; there is the magnetic power of attraction, there is the magnetic power, that attracts the Holy Spirit of God into that being, and though the Holy Spirit of God does not immediately quicken that Spirit, because it is impossible for It to do so at that particular juncture, He surrounds that little entity with Himself, He curtains it, He canopies it, He is the "Cloud on the Sanctuary," and the "Pillar of Fire," the "Shekinah," that preserves, guides, and protects that Spirit wherever that Spirit is, and whatsoever kind of body it is encased in, though it be the body of a cannibal, or a head hunter, or a Red Indian, or an ignorant Maori, or, maybe in the body of a very cultured Englishman, a Christian, or a Hindu.

And so that Spirit occupies him, and the symbolism of the "tabernacle in the wilderness" beautifully illustrates this. It is covered with raw hides, "badgers' skins," as the outside covering; then there are three other coverings inside, of different coloured materials. Then inside that there is the structure of wood, "Shittim wood," the commonest wood there is, covered with gold, then inside that there are the two parts, symbolising the Body and Soul, the "Holy Place," and the "Most Holy Place." The outer covering of hides answers to the earth body; the two-chambered "tabernacle" to the microcosm. That is the "tabernacle," symbolising Man—the microcosm, Body and Soul, covered with the earth body; and over and above, on the top of this "tabernacle in the wilderness" there is the "Pillar of Cloud by Day" (called the "Shekinah") and the "Pillar of Fire by night," and when that Pillar moves, the congregation moves with it, and when it stays, it stays. That is illustrative of the predestinating power of God in all time, through all the ages of the past, in which the potential and æonial sons of God, predestinated, preordained, but still Unre-Generated creatures—Man—are protected, guided, shielded, preserved in all the ages, even though they may,

at some periods of the Æon, have been most degraded. That is the secret of the doctrine of predestination, because it is the Infinite, Eternal Presence of God, in His Spirit, bivouacing and canopying over God's Elect, from the depths into which they have sunk, to the gradual rising and ascending up the steep hill of Redemptive Evolution, until finally the time comes when they have evolved in their human nature, the Spirit; the Soul and Spirit-Consciousness; so that they can hear the Voice of God speaking through the rugged human voices of His prophets and apostles, and they can hearken to the Truth of God, defaced as it often is by the "foolishness of preaching"; they can recognise the Call of God in the tumult of this world. If you have risen to that state of Soul-and-Spirit-Consciousness, then there is a time when either you will obey the Call, you will hearken to the Voice, you will heed the Message, and obey it; or you will turn it down. And that is the crucial moment in the whole of your cosmic æonial history since the Fall; whether you are going to take the Message, or refuse it, whether you are going to "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ" and be "saved," or whether you are going to be "damned," to use Scriptural language. Because that refusal of Christ is the steady start down the hill which will end ultimately in the loss of your organic identity and personality, the loss of your cosmical individuality, your own self-reprobation. You will simply dissipate into the ether, and lose your "being" and "existence."

It is in the earth body that is contained all those potentialities of evil, as well as of good. Beneath the earth body there is the *microcosm*, and the microcosm is divided into seven definite, distinct entities, or component parts; all one really, but sevenfold, the *Septad*, as it is called in mystical language. The *Septad* is constituted as follows, from the outer to the inner. First the *Physical Body* (which is distinct from the earth body); second, the *Noumenal Body*; third, the *Psychical Body*; and fourth, the *Spiritual Body*. That is Four Bodies. But, associated and eternally identical

with each of these Four Bodies, there are *Three Spiritual Natures* or Sources of Energy, all emanating from the Centre, which is the *Spirit*. They are emanations from the Spirit, in which each of those Three Bodies is supplied with Spiritual Energy, Divine Energy wherewith to function. These several Natures serve as crucibles, or retorts; that which is identical with the Physical Body, is the Body-Nature; that which is identical with the Noumenal Body is the *Mind-Nature*, and that which is identical with the Psychical Body is the *Soul-Nature*, and that which is identical with the Spiritual Body is the *Spirit*. Such is the case, in our abnormal constitution, that those Three outermost Bodies, the Physical, Noumenal, and Psychical, are impregnated and interpenetrated by the earth body, which inheres in it, and the elements of the earth, and the astral hell, and the demons, pass into the earth body, and interpenetrate these Three Bodies. Therefore they are encrustated and hardened, as time goes on in each lifetime, by the calcareous matter impregnated with the astral and earthly corrupt elements of the earth body. This causes a twist, if I may use the term, of the microcosm. It has lost its uprightness; it has lost its perpendicular; it has lost its balance; it is abnormal. There is a bending down of the Three Bodies, the Psychical, Noumenal and Physical, towards the earth body, which is gripped by the powerful hand or force of the earth and the astral, so that it is bent down, and the actions of the microcosm conform to the earth body. The *Spiritual Body* is the only part that remains perpendicular. That is the Divine foundation of the microcosm; all the rest droops down, is unbalanced, abnormal, so that the Spirit Natures abiding in man, which normally are attached to the Three Bodies, have to be treated by the processes of Redemptive Evolution, and of Re-Generation. They are no longer functionally attached to the Three Bodies, the Physical, Noumenal and Psychical, therefore they can no longer function. They are simply taken away, they go back, and sink themselves in the Spirit, which is the Centre,

or the Christ-Within. That is what is meant when, after the wickedness of man had become so great after the Fall, it says, that God said, "My Spirit can no longer abide in these men, because they have caused themselves to become flesh." The Spirit is removed, which had been the spontaneous source of interior movement that energised the functions of the Physical, Noumenal, and Psychical Bodies before the Fall, but could no longer do so after the Fall; they retreated, they retired into the Spirit, and there they are in the Spirit now, in each of us, lost, dead, buried in Sin, shut up in the sepulchres of matter and earth corruption.

Something has got to energise the functions of the earth body in the place of the lost Spirit. What is it? Why, the interpenetration of the earth body, and its distribution in the Physical, Noumenal and Psychical Bodies, brings with it capacity only to correspond to the external, to the earthly and firmamental environment; therefore, the actuation and energising of the functions of these Three Bodies are performed by the "*genii*," the "*demons*." That is exactly where I started. I have come back to the point. You may be a very efficient person. You may be able to do all manner of good things, or bad things, by the "genius" which is in you, but that genius is not your genius, it is not God's genius; it is the devil's genius; and he will give you all the capacity and assistance in the world to enable you to use every faculty and power you possess to become the most successful person in the line of life you are drawn to follow, or the greatest of human failures, the best, or the worst man or woman that ever lived, just as the devil pleases. That is the devil's business. But inside the mass of humanity that is in the grip of the devil, there are, mingled and hidden, God's Elect, His potential children. They may not prevail against the devil in this lifetime, as they did not in former lifetimes, and they may now be some of the devil's own tools. They may be obeying the orders of the Devil, thinking they are doing God's will and God's service, because there are very few people in this world who know that the

God that is being worshipped and served to-day, and the Christ that is being worshipped and served to-day, are not God our Heavenly Father, and not the Lord Jesus Christ. And the spirit that prompts men to religion, philanthropy, and deeds of "derring do," is not the Spirit of God; it is these "evil spirits," these deceiving "spirits," the "*genii*," "*demons*," "gods" of the firmament. And it is becoming more and more pronounced in these last days, in fulfilment of prophecy. I defy you to take a single prophecy of the Old Testament and prove that any one of these prophecies has failed of fulfilment up to the present day. What does the Apostle say? "*The Spirit of God expressly said that in the last days men should depart from the Faith*"—that is, the Faith of the Divine Mysteries—"*giving heed to seducing spirits, to teachings of demons.*" And so emphatic is it, that the Apostle defines exactly some of the particular tenets that these "seducing spirits" inject into men's minds, "commanding to abstain from eating meat, and forbidding to marry." That is exactly the feature of many movements that are going on to-day. One of the great movements to-day is what is called "birth control." You probably know more about it than I do, but there is a wide-spreading movement to-day, which will ultimately result, as it is doing in America, in abstinence from sex relationship amongst married people, the compulsory prohibition of child-birth. That is spreading very widely to-day, especially in the "feminist" movement, with the object of reducing to a cipher the male sex. The same might be said with regard to the subject of eating meat, but it is too late to-day for me to say anything about it. Therefore you see what the Path of the Divine Mysteries is intended for. It is to smash up this old earth body of yours, to knock it into shape, so that the Spirit that is in you may grow, and spread itself, and be restored to these Three Bodies, so that they may be straightened from their twistings. And though, of course, after the process of Re-Generation, you still have your old earth body, but it is a purified earth body, an emancipated

earth body, a saved earth body, a redeemed earth body, and the devil has no longer dominion over that earth body, and the only atmosphere that can penetrate into that earth body is the Heavenly atmosphere. And you absolutely resist, you are hermetically sealed against any kind of pollution and corruption of this earth and air and world. You are free from the earth body. As St Paul says: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh (earth body), and the Spirit (the microcosm)." That is what the Path of the Divine Mysteries is for. You do not get it done by a mere wash. It is not like plunging into a pool of the blood of Jesus, and getting it done once for all. That is a superstition, a false "doctrine of demons," that has been spread about for many centuries. But Re-Generation is a process by which you extract yourself from all the environment of the World and the flesh, from the earth body and the devil. And it is a big, long, hard, strenuous process, and you can never get on to that process until you make a start. That is all I have to say to-night. You will forgive, I know, my manner of speech, but in the hard crust of a discourse of this kind there is a kernel, and, if you can only crack the crust, you will find that the kernel is sweet and nourishing, and it will feed you, and give you a determined purpose to get on to the Path; but you will never arrive there until you have got your feet well planted on the Path of the Divine Mysteries.

LECTURE II

THE MICROCOSM—(2)

TO-NIGHT I want to go farther into the subject which we commenced last Monday night. The subject is, the "*microcosm*," and of course you know the "microcosm" is the antithesis of the word "macrocosm." "Macrocosm" is a word which means the large or great cosmos. "Microcosm" is a word which means the little cosmos. Every organism is a microcosm, a little cosmos. It is the name that was attached to the organism in ancient mysticism, long before history was started, and it has continued ever since. We have rather lost the meaning and use of that word in these days, and some people really have to look up the dictionary to find out what microcosm means, and then they do not quite get the correct definition. But the use of the word "microcosm" for an organism immediately suggests the likeness of the organism to the cosmos itself. The word "*cosmos*" means "Universe," and therefore every organism is a little universe, that is, a replica or counterpart of the universe in all its parts. Therefore, when we examine the universe, and analyse it to discover its proportions, we also analyse and discover the proportions of the microcosm. That is to say, you begin to find out a little about yourself as an organism; how you are constituted, how you are built, how you are constructed, just as when you begin to study the astronomy of the universe, the biology of the universe, and all the other 'ologies of the universe, you have an exact representation of the same 'ologies with regard to yourself, and the different proportions of your constitution. Now, therefore, we must

take a little glance at the universe, we will see how the universe is constructed. It has interested me very much, and I was rather glad to see a scientific article the other day which did say very distinctly, as very rarely it is stated, that the Sun—what we call the Sun—is really not the Sun, but it is only a reflection of the Sun—but that *the Sun*, the real cosmic orb, is infinitely farther away, and differently constituted from the appearance of the Sun we see in the sky. I do not know whether you are aware of it, but the rays of the real Sun are cold and not warm, and that the heat which comes from the sun only arises when the rays get close to the atmosphere of this planet, when they hit against this planet. As a matter of fact, the rays of light, which are the source of heat, are made hot purely by impact and friction, just as when you rub your two hands together when they are cold, to make them warm. And the heat that comes to us from what we call the sun is due to the impact and conflict of the elements of the real Sun (which are absolutely cold) with the atmosphere, which is opaque and dense, and therefore friction takes place, which causes combustion, conflagration and fire. The sun that is seen from this planet is really nothing other than the conflagration due to the refraction of the light rays from the solar orb in the centre of the universe, as they hit the outer boundaries of the atmosphere of this planet, and burn, and continually burn, and eternally will burn so long as there is atmosphere for the light rays of the sun to hit against. And all this speculation as to how long the burning sun will last before it burns out, is a huge mistake. It shows how really ignorant astronomers are, because they do not study ancient science. But whilst the Sun, the solar orb, the cosmic sphere, the real Sun, that is the centre of the universe—whilst the Sun is eternally shedding its infinite rays of pure light from its centre, and whilst the rays of the Sun pass into the universe, and hit up against the atmosphere of this earth, the fire of what we call the sun will go on burning, and there will be no diminution of the fire. What we see in the burning

sun we can analyse, and learn the exact chemical properties of the heat and rays of the burning sun, that fall upon us, and give us light, heat, life and vitality. That will go on *ad infinitum*, unless there should cease to be an atmosphere.

Now that is a point we have to consider—*how long will the atmosphere remain on the earth?* I want to assure you that the atmosphere is far more dense to-day than it was millions of years ago, and it is becoming denser and denser all the time, just as the earth is becoming more and more contracted and hard, and greater volumes of inflammable elements pass into the atmosphere. It has done so in the ages that have passed by, and will do so in the ages that may still be to follow. Therefore we must visualise, if we can, in our imagination—I do not ask you to believe it, because you could scarcely believe it at first hearing—the Sun, the cosmic sphere, the solar orb of the universe, infinite in its light-expanse, filling what we call space—though there is no such thing as space really; this is the centre of the universe. Now the ancients always used to define scientific knowledge by certain symbolical terms, and therefore the solar orb was called the "Sun." It had many other names besides, but it was called the "Sun" generally, and we know it by that term. Then they divided up the universe into seven sections, seven concentric circles. They were not actual dimensional circles, because you cannot describe circles when there is no space to describe them in, and no limit to their dimensions. Now, that is rather difficult to comprehend, is it not? But there are seven distinct *habitats*, Kingdoms of Heaven, or circles of the universe, and these branch out or radiate from the centre, the Sun, in spiral order, to the infinite beyond. That is about the best way I can put it. When talking of infinite terms you have to be finite in your definitions, which is very difficult. And they named the seven circles by the names of the seven so-called "major planets." We call them to-day the seven "major planets." They are the seven planets that shone most

conspicuously in the heavens, long before any other planets were noticed or observed as planets. Of course they called the *Sun* a planet too, but it is more than a planet, sun and planet in one. First of all, there was the circle of "*Mercury*." That was the nearest of the circles to the Sun. Then, around that, a concentric circle called "*Venus*," and then "*Luna*," or Moon. I will give you the reason why they did not name this circle "*Terra*," or "Earth"—why they did not name that circle by the name "Earth." There is a very interesting romance about it. Beyond "*Luna*" there was "*Mars*," beyond "*Mars*" there was "*Saturn*," and beyond "*Saturn*" there was "*Jupiter*." Now the reason why "Earth" was not anciently the cognomen given for that planetary circle is, because the Earth is a distinct body from all the other sidereal bodies. It has distinctly different creative functions to perform in the universe from the functions of all the other planets in the cosmical system, in the eternal processes of evolution. Therefore they gave the cognomen to this particular planetary circle of "*Luna*" or "Moon," and the reason was because the moon is the daughter—the youngest daughter—of the earth, and if something had not happened to arrest the growth of the moon, the moon would ultimately have outdistanced its revolutions round the earth and become an independent planet of itself, as all the other planets have done. But something happened of a fatal character which destroyed the earth's normal ethereality of substance, and the moon's power of growth was destroyed, and therefore the moon has remained a poor little atrophied baby planet, reduced to dead materiality, and in perpetual bondage to the attraction of the earth, around which it has revolved during all the subsequent periods of time. If Luna had only got beyond the power of this earth's attraction some millions of years sooner than it did, Luna would not be the dead material object it is now, but it would be an independent planet scintillating and revolving in the universe, as all the other planets do. Now, the first of these planetary circles is the

Sun ; the second, Mercury ; the third, Venus ; the fourth, Luna ; and then come Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter. Therefore you see the Earth is fixed, according to ancient astronomy, in the centre of the seven concentric circles of the universe, in the circle of Luna. There is a reason for that which I will try to explain. Firstly, the Sun is an infinite orb, so immense, so immeasurable in magnitude, proportions and dimensions, that it does really rule the universe as the centre of all gravity and motional force in the universe. "Gravity:" now that is a wonderful word, and nobody seems to know exactly what it means to-day. We use the word "gravity," but opinions are mixed as to what it means. I define the macrocosm, or universe, as an "androgynous" organism, which means male and female in one body ; and if you will believe what I say, you are all of you "androgynous" in your constitution, because the Body—what is called the Body, the microcosm—is dual, or twofold, being Body and Soul ; a replica of the macrocosm. The Body is the female and the Soul is the male. And you have got a Soul, have you not ? That is the *male* of you. And you have got a Body, have you not ? That is the *female* of you. Therefore you must be androgynous, and it is by procreative and congenital contact of the Soul and the Body that actions are performed, that thoughts are thought, and all things proceed from. It is the same with the universe. The cosmos is an organism which is constituted androgynously ; that is to say, male and female.

Now, what part of the universe is the male ? I will tell you. The male is, in the first instance, the Sun, because from the Sun comes the sperm, or seminal effluence, which generates and fertilises the seed of all life, form, and being, universally. And those heavenly bodies that are connected and associated with the Sun are what we call the "fixed stars." Some people are pleased to call these stellar groups "constellations." They are not planets ; they are all subsidiary suns in various forms and degrees of evolution. Many of the constellations are, to a large extent, purely

nebular ; and all these bodies are formed in stellar groups, all rotate around their axes, and the several groups of constellations revolve in their various orbits around the Sun. They are the vehicles, the containers, of the sperm or semen of life, being, and form of all organisms, which, eternally residing in the Sun, and passing through an infinity of processes of cellular evolution in the Sun, at last emanate from the Sun, and are drawn into the ether space, and the whole organisation of the cosmos. In their first appearance as individual organisms, they appear in the form of light cells, radiating from the Sun. The constellatory groups of solar bodies are the male, or father of the cosmos. Then the female, or the mother of the universe, is the planetary system. Now, you know there are twelve so-called " Houses of the Zodiac." They are really twelve angles of the square of the cosmical circle, the centre being the Sun. Into each of these twelve angles or " Houses " every one of the constellations passes, in due course of their revolutions, so many times in given periods of cosmical journeys round the sun. You cannot see more than a small portion of the sidereal system of the universe from this planet, but beyond the visible stellar bodies and groups there are infinitely more of these constellatory groups and planetary systems. These constellatory groups revolve around the Sun in their specific orbits. The planetary spheres also revolve around the Sun in their orbits, which orbits are always elliptical, that is, oval in shape, and there is good reason for that, which I will explain shortly. The constellatory groups are not elliptical but circular in their revolutions. Now, we will take, for example, the constellation of " Orion," one of the finest constellations we see around this zone of the universe. You see it move. If you watch and observe, you will see it is never in the same place ; it is always running round, just as do the planets. There is a point in the centre of the universe—the Sun—which it works around, and it passes, therefore, in the course of its revolutions round the Sun, through each one of the twelve Houses of the Zodiac. But then the planets

do the same, in elliptical orbits. They pass through the very same twelve Houses of the Zodiac. Now, supposing Orion happens to be passing through the House of the Zodiac which astronomically is called "Aries," and at the same time one of the planets belonging to the planetary circle of Jupiter is passing through the same; a contact, a conjugation takes place, and in the course of the elliptical motion of the planets there is always a time when the planets are nearer the Sun than at any other time, or farther away, and it is according to the exact distance or space in the ellipse of the orbit of the planet as to whether that planet is going to be seminated or conjugated by the particular solar sphere in that particular constellation of Orion, and the conjugation, or semination, takes place, the force of attraction of the planet drawing from the constellatory sphere the seed or semen of that sphere into the generative organs of the planet. Therefore there is a conjugation takes place, resulting in the reproduction of a newly evolved organism, and that is the process which accounts for evolution, a congenital process of procreation of organisms, repeating in every stage of evolution. It is all nonsense to look for "missing links" on this planet, because there are none; organisms are created evolutionally in the several planetary circles. Therefore, to define the functions of the planets, and the functions of the solar spheres or constellations, the seven planetary circles are divided into three distinct sub-divisions. First, the Sun, the archetype, the father of all seed of the sperm that flows from the body of the Sun. Second, the vehicles of the semen, the receptacles, or the retainers, are the constellations which revolve around the Sun. Third, the five evolutionary or creative planetary circles—Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter—and it is in those five planetary circles (not to be confused with the "major planets," from which they took their names, or you will get mixed up, but the five planetary circles I have named —Mercury, Venus, Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter), which are the evolutionary or creative planetary circles. For what pur-

pose? By contact in the Houses of the Zodiac, between the constellatory groups and the planets in their several circles, are brought to birth in these planets, evolutionary organisms; which bringing to birth is a further development or evolution of the same organisms which have previously been brought to birth in the periods of the past infinite progress of evolution. Thus evolution takes place in these five creative planets. The five creative planets are of different constitution respectively. There is no possible fixation, stabilisation, or consolidation of the organisms in their inchoate forms in these five creative planets. They are still volatile, unformated. Now it happens that the earth in its ellipse also passes through the Twelve Houses of the Zodiac, and contact the other planets in their several revolutions, and there is a descent, if I may use the term, a transmission by the force of attraction that belongs to the Earth—a centripetal force that passes from the earth, that meets the centrifugal force of the planets that have these newly evolved organisms; so that there is the consequent passage of organisms from the planets to the earth, and therefore the earth is the mother-planet having special functions of its own.

And what are these functions? The earth used to be called the Formative Planet, the Fixative Planet. In other words, the Fixative Planet is the "crucible" holding the "metal" of the inchoate and volatile constitutions of the organisms evolved in the other planets. Thereby in that crucible, or retort, or mould, the volatile molten substance of the organism receives its fixated quality for the time being, in its particular ratio of cosmical evolution. Now what happens in this planet? What happens to gold when it is in the molten state? Firstly, if there is any impurity in it, it is burned out. Secondly, it is formed into a certain shape, and as the metal becomes hardened, it becomes fixated in that particular form or shape. That is the fixation of the gold—the formation of the gold into a certain character, type, shape and appearance. That is why this planet is

called the Formative Planet. There is then only one sphere in the universe in which "sin" could ever enter—in which anything like what we call a "Fall" could ever occur, because this planet is not only the formative, the fixative sphere, but it is also the probationary or testing sphere—the sphere in which organisms, evolved in the creative spheres, are developed. In the Earth-Sphere there are certain processes of fixation, proving and testing, going on. That is what takes place on this planet, and therefore, in all the infinite ages of the past this planet has always been a planet of probation or testing. You know what probation implies. It implies a possibility, aye, even a liability, of failure in the trial. It does not mean that there is bound to be a failure, and only once in the eternal history of the cosmos, of the macrocosm, or universe, has there been such failure. But that very fact proves that it has been possible at any other period. There was, however, long ages ago, a failure, and the failure resulted in the "Fall." Theosophically it is called "the descent of the earth into matter." Now when I was giving a lecture at the Theosophical Lodge last January, and I was obliged to conform to the usage of the Lodge, and therefore had to sit down and be plied with questions which I had to answer, one young man put up a very good question. I was very glad to hear that question. There was no animus about it; it was a real, good, solid, intelligent question, and it was, "What is the difference between 'matter' and 'substance'?" Well, there is a vast difference between matter and substance. Matter is substance, but that does not imply that substance is always matter, and I do make this distinction, and for very good and solid reason. Matter is the degradation, the depravity of substance. The universe never knew what matter was until the Fall, and matter has a history, as the earth has a history, dating from that period of the Fall. This earth was once composed of substance, in the same way as the Sun, the planetary spheres, the constellatory spheres, the ether of space, and the Light-cells are composed of substance. If I were talking to a lot of

scientists I would not press this distinction (but you are not scientists) because the scientist uses the word " material " in a very different and wider sense from that in which it is generally understood and used. Therefore, ether, life, according to scientific utterance, would be material, but there is a difference between ether, and life, and the composition of a planet or a sun, and that of this present material earth. If you threw a stone or a brick at my head I should find out how material I was, and the missile was; but if you hurl light and heat at me you will not hurt me at all. This planet used to be substance, cool and luminous, fragrant, moist and ethereal. We get some kind of a comprehension of what it must have been if we look into a person's eyes. How beautiful and limpid the eye is! It scintillates with a luminous lustre, and that is a decent sort of resemblance, on the material plane, of what the earth and the organisms on the earth were before the Fall—translucent, luminous and glorious. Now take that word " glory," which you have often found in the Scriptures, as for instance in the passage : " We, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory unto glory." What a canting, emotional, nonsensical term " glory " is in most people's minds. They sing " Oh it is glory, Oh it is glory, in my soul," and they do not know what they are singing about. What they mean is " I am happy," but that is not what " glory " means. The word " glory " in the original acceptation of the term means, *cosmical form, or constitution.* St Paul uses the term about the stars, when he says that " one star differs in glory from another star." That means the difference of the constitutional form of the various stars. The glory, the luminous divinity of the stars differs from one another. Now this planet, which we call the earth, had a " glory " of its own. Let me tell you what that " glory " was, and then perhaps you will wish it was the same now. If you are a good Disciple, you will see it restored one of these days, because the earth is going to have the " glory " restored to it, and if you do what you are told, and follow

the Path of the Divine Mysteries, you will contribute to its restoration. What was the "glory" of the earth? Now this does not come out of my head. I am not romancing, but I know what I am talking about. The Sun began to bring forth children, and the first planet that came forth from the Sun was the Earth, and it was a very great planet in magnitude. I want to tell you this; that the earth today is the most important, the greatest, and the oldest of the spheres of the universe, except the Sun. It was the Sun's first-born daughter, and it became the spouse of the Sun, because it became the first female part of the universe, the wife of the Sun, and mother of all the heavenly bodies. Of course, there is no such thing as "time" in the universe. You must take that into your consideration. But this planet was originally the greatest, the vastest, and the most important of all the spheres in the universe, the first emanation from the Sun; and all the planets and constellations of the solar systems are really the great, great, great, great grandchildren, *ad infinitum*, of the Sun-father and the Earth-mother. They married and intermarried amongst themselves so much that you cannot give their real genealogy and chronology, nor estimate their number. The Earth is the Mother of all the sidereal systems, as the Sun is the Father of them. But you say, "Don't the scientists, the astronomers, tell us that this earth of ours is one of the tiniest specks in the universe?" That is perfectly true, but then, the astronomers have never seen the planets, nor any of the sidereal bodies, in their substantial form, just as they have never seen the Sun. The bright flaming objects we see in the sky are only fiery reflections of the Sun, the constellations, and the planets—light reflections from the different spheres, whose rays come within the confines of the earth's attraction, and burst into conflagration on the outermost boundaries of the dense atmosphere that surrounds this earth, and illumines this dark material globe. Therefore we are living in a state of illusion when we talk of seeing the planets, even through the most powerful telescopes.

But you say, "How do these reflections move?" The stars move, and therefore the reflections must move with them. If you have a mirror, and walk in front of it, your reflection in the mirror moves with you. That is so with the planets. They move in exactly the same ratio as the reflection, though they are themselves invisible.

Then this earth had a Fall. How did it come about? You remember I said that this earth is the only place where a Fall could take place. It is the only probationary sphere in the universe. Organisms have got to come back to this planet in every cycle of their evolutionary career. That is the reason why there are so many different qualities and attributes amongst people to-day. There are some persons who are sometimes called "old souls." I do not like the term, because all souls are of equal age, which is no age at all. But there are certain people who seem to be more evolved than other people. It is not necessarily so that those who outwardly seem to be more highly evolved than others, are so. "Man judgeth by outward appearance, but God judgeth by the heart." The apparently best people, "choice souls," cultured and intellectual persons, are often the lowest evolved, microcosmically, with a thicker veneer than other persons of the world's culture, choiceness, and illusive spirituality and goodness. "Scratch the skin, and the tiger flies out," is the case with the best of these people. If we once get into the vortex of the Path of the Divine Mysteries we find people who seemed to be the least evolved, are the most evolved, and have the most evolved qualities and characteristics, which the Path of the Divine Mysteries brings to light; and *vice versa*. But it is a fact that there are some souls more evolved than others. Therefore the astrologists in a sense are right, though their whole methods are wrong and delusive. There are some "Mercury" people, and there are some "Luna" people; it all depends on their state of progress in evolution, and the creative planetary circle from which they reincarnate. And the human genus has gone round this universe in such a multi-

tude of æons that they have touched all the different planetary circles multitudes of times, and retain evolutional impresses of each of these planetary circles. It therefore necessarily was the case that when the earth fell, there were people of each of these planetary circles on the earth at the time, and therefore they became involved in the Fall. What we are trying to do now—it is a very hard job, but we have the courage to start afresh—what we are trying to do now is to give people back the old "glory" that they have lost. Not the American "Old Glory," but the real old "glory" that we have all of us lost; and the Path of the Divine Mysteries is the only way to recover the old "glory." Though it may take a long time, and we may die before it is accomplished, we shall leave some to carry on the work. But the Fall did take place—not by one act, but by a series of actions and crises occupying ages of gradual declension. It is all nonsense to believe that Adam ate the apple. I see the latest cult says that Eve was not the one who committed the first sin, that it was Adam. Anyhow it is not true that either Adam or Eve ate the apple, though it is the most wonderful allegory that has ever been written, and therefore I would not ridicule it. What really took place was this. The inhabitants of the earth, man and beast (they were not "man and beast" then as we know them, for they all had the "glory," and the animals were incalculably more intelligent and finer creatures than the most evolved soul of humanity to-day; the animals in those days knew everything in an infinitely superior way than the human knows anything now), had perfect consciousness and knowledge of God. God was there, and it was a wonderful time, because they did not have to trouble about anything, nor fly, nor go out of the body to go out of one sphere into another, or to have conversation with God, because God was with them, His Knowledge and Power were their Knowledge and Power—both man and beast. There was no such thing as time and space and distance and presence or absence. I am not now going to tell you the story of the Fall. But as a

matter of fact it did come to pass that God, dwelling in the Sun—that is where God's Home is, "In My Father's house are many homes," rules the universe, and God is a person, and lives in the Sun—not in the "sun" we see burning in the sky, but in the glorious orb which is the centre of the universe, so full of infinite magnetism that it can draw and pull and push and drive every one of the solar and planetary spheres, each in its own orbit, and group them all like a happy household without quarrelling. And what the Sun is in the universe, God is in the Sun, therefore God is the primary Ruler of the universe. It is only because we have got out of the sphere of attraction, the magnetic power, the rulership of the Sun, that we start quarrelling with one another on this planet. We should all run each in his own orbit, and we should never cross one another's orbit, as we are always doing in this planet. So when the earth broke away from the Sun's magnetism, through the breaking away of those organisms that were responsible to this earth as the primary vehicle for the receiving and distributing of the Divine vitality, eternal life, power, wisdom and knowledge of God, there was a breaking away from God. It was just the same as if you were to refuse to eat, and you did not eat, until at last you died. That is exactly what we were on this planet in those days. You and I were there. We could not help it. Thank God, it was not everybody that broke away, that rebelled against God. But some did, and as the consequence of the deeds of some on this planet, all the creatures and organisms residing on this planet suffered the Fall, and its consequences. They suffered in the same way as if some vile men blocked the stream to the reservoir, in consequence of which the reservoir dried up, and the whole of the inhabitants of the place had to go without water. So it was at the Fall. We did not all participate in the cause of the Fall, but we all suffered the consequences equally with those who rebelled.

That is the difference between what are called the "Elect people of God," and "Reprobates." The first Reprobates

were those who defied God. They rebelled. They would not obey God, and the law of the cosmos that God Himself enacted. They broke God's laws, the laws of the cosmos, in a most central and crucial point. The result was the breaking away of this planet from the source of life and growth and creative evolution, and the effect of that was that the substance of the "glory" of this earth departed. And in the process of many æons this earth got harder and harder; it gradually contracted; all the fire, the luminosity, the ethereality, the brightness, the "glory," that was in the substance of the earth became imprisoned in this material shell. Then followed, ages after, what are called the cataclysmic ages, caused by the eruptive effects of the materialisation of the earth and the destructive forces of fire, water, and dynamic elements, breaking loose beneath the earth's crust of matter. These material elements—earth, water, air, fire—did not exist as such in the primordial Earth. And you know what happens when fire and water, and the other contrary elements come together. All the wonderful properties of this planet in its glorious form became condensed into gaseous, aqueous and igneous elements. They all got mixed up, and the result was a succession of cataclysms, and these cataclysms and their effects are portrayed in the allegory of "Noah and the Ark." That was what caused the "glacial period." And these cataclysms came, they followed one another in different parts of the earth during many ages, and finally the whole earth was completely submerged in murky, atmospheric, watery blackness. The glorious ether that was in the earth's environment, that was normally the vehicle, the canopy, of the Divine Glory and Fire, became mixed up, deteriorated, and degenerated, and the constituents of the atmosphere, the smoke, the dust, the mud, and the accumulation of filth, and the exhalations of the dead and rotten creatures, as well as of corrupt, carnal living creatures all contributed to the formation of the dense material atmosphere befogging the earth; with the result that there was darkness over all the earth. The earth was

immersed in darkness, and for a long time it was so dense that the rays that fell from the solar orb, the planets and constellations, could not pierce their way through; until finally they burnt their way through; and thus, according to the Genesis allegory, the burning "sun" came into existence, and the burning "stars" came into existence, reflections of the glorious heavenly bodies which we do not see, but only their reflected images in these burning lights. And of course man, and all creatures, conform to their environment, and every time we are re-incarnated, whether from Paradise or from the Astral Plane—wherever we come from—we are re-incarnated as spirits in substance, but not in matter. When we enter this earth we take on the matter which is in the earth, and all its corruption of earth, air, water, and fire, and every palpitation of the heart, every breath, every pulsation, all the food and drink we partake, adds to the materialisation and the adulteration of the substance of the microcosm, our being, and the result is, re-incarnation after re-incarnation (for we live only a few years in one life-time, in these days very much fewer than formerly), by the time we have got half through our life we are nothing else than "*sarcophagi*," the body is dead—"dead in trespasses and sins." And you may think you are a fine fellow, you may be able to play beautiful music, and do other beautiful things, and be a very "choice" beautiful soul, and yet you are only a dead man, because it is not you that is doing all that, it is the "*genii*," the "*demons*," that occupy the Astral Plane, who are running this earth and controlling all human actions. But when disciples get on the Path of the Divine Mysteries, then do they begin to emancipate their souls from the filth of the flesh and of the world and of the devil, and they become servants and slaves of God, and the same body of matter, purified from the corruption of Hell and the flesh, is fitted to become the temple and the tabernacle of God. For, in such case, God, by His Spirit, dwells in their emancipated, liberated and regenerated souls, the instrument and agent of God speaking through you, and

living through you, even though you are only a "runt" as far as this world is concerned. We are all willing to be a "runt" on the Path, we are willing to be fools, because we know that Christ has the victory and lives in the least of us, and we live only by the power of God Almighty.

LECTURE III

PRELIMINARIES TO THE STEP OF SELF-ABNEGATION

A REMARK was made to me during last week, by one who has attended most of our lectures and classes, which struck me forcibly and impressed me; and I am going to repeat that remark, as the basis of what I am about to say to-night. It was said, "When, at the commencement of your lectures, you defined and discussed the principle underlying the Step of Self-Abnegation, several of us accepted that principle, and, by faith, we have taken the Step of Self-Abnegation; but there are others who have been attending who have not gone that far, and they are now thinking it over, and they are somewhat perplexed because you have not spoken much about Self-Abnegation since, but have gone on to other topics of the teaching, and have not brought it forward to any great extent." And the suggestion was, that this was a little confusing to those who were only beginners in the study and inquiry into the Sacred Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries; and the further suggestion was made that I should be more explicit before ceasing the lectures, on this particular subject of Self-Abnegation. Of course I reminded this dear soul who spoke to me about it—and I very much appreciate the remark—that I was giving these lectures for the purpose of going over summarily the entire range of the teaching, from the beginning to the climax, and in the five lectures that preceded the course I am now giving, I went over that range and delivered a course of lectures, one of which was definitely on the subject of Self-Abnegation. But I finished up the course with the

lecture on "The Seven Golden Gates of Initiation in the Divine Mysteries," and I should not have been true to the message I had to deliver on this first occasion of addressing a London audience, if I had confined myself to the one topic only. But having delivered myself of that particular topic, I went farther, to show what follows the Step of Self-Abnegation, and what it implies in the matter of experience, of obligation, and of the demands of God upon each disciple who takes the Step of Self-Abnegation. And I think you will agree with me that I made a pretty good success of it.

I am not often proud of myself, but I did think the Great Master managed to get something through on this particular telephone wire, to give you some kind of idea what really the Path of the Divine Mysteries means from beginning to end. But having finished that job, I will now go right back, and will concede to my friend who made these remarks that particular point, because, after all it is perfectly true—and I have said it—if you are going to have me here speaking on the subject of the Divine Mysteries, you will have nothing else than Self-Abnegation drummed into you. That is true, because it is the beginning and the end of the whole subject—*Self-Abnegation.* You must know it is a tremendous philosophy, and if you are expecting me to be able to define it, to analyse it, and discuss it with you, even in six months, you are mistaken, because it will not take less than two years to get only a little way wedged into your consciousness what the Path of the Divine Mysteries means. There is a dear brother who has been following the Path of the Divine Mysteries for I do not know how many years—a sincere, earnest and intelligent man—and he is only just beginning to find out what the Path of the Divine Mysteries really is in his own particular case, and in its highest aspects.

There are two processes that have to be gone through in the work, or Labours, of *Re-Generation.* The one is *Purgation,* and the other is *Rectification.* That is a word I have never used before in this connection, but it is apt and explicit. Neither of these two processes can possibly be effected until

the disciple has not only realised and apprehended the meaning and philosophy and truth of Self-Abnegation, but has taken it up and followed it in direct personal practice. Purgation refers to the preliminary process that must be accomplished before Rectification can begin. Our Great Master has given us a wonderful illustration of that in what is commonly called " The Parable of the Sower," a parable which nobody seems to understand or to be able properly and rightly to interpret. The parable of the Sower is an illustration of how *not* to preach the Gospel of the Divine Mysteries, and finally, *how to do it*. There has to be Purgation before there can be Rectification, and there cannot be anything further to follow in the process until Purgation and Rectification have been accomplished. Because " Rectification " does not mean fruitfulness or fruition ; it only means that course of preparation, training, and discipline, that precedes and creates the possibility of bringing forth fruits, and the last of the processes of Re-Generation that the Great Master gives us in this parable is the proper sowing of the seed, predicating the sower, the seed, and the *good ground*. All the previous sowings were improper, foolish, and futile, because the ground was not prepared. You have got first to get the *good ground* to sow on, for what is the use of sowing good seed on ground that has not been properly prepared to receive it ? Here is where Jesus points out the errors and follies and mistakes of the ordinary priest, and teacher, rabbi and preacher, as I venture to point out to-day to the priests, teachers and Gospel preachers of this present day—all the time they are sowing seed on wrong ground—on ground that has not been purged and rectified ; to say nothing of the wrong seed sown, corrupted, spurious, and unfertile. You have got to go through the preliminary processes first. I laboured under the same mistake myself for many, many years. I sowed seed. It was not particularly well-prepared seed, but mixed up with many weeds of error, that I sowed in those days, because I had not got the true seed as I have now ; but there was a good deal of good seed in what I did

sow. Some of it, however, was what the Americans would call "bum seed." I used to preach on platforms and in pulpits the "good old Gospel" seed, part of which was sound, and part very unsound and false; but I preached it pell-mell and indiscriminately. And when I could not get an audience big enough to take it, I tried to win the people by offering them all kinds of inducements to come and hear it; brass bands, oratorios, choirs, incense, processions, and so on. That helped to fill the church, and then I preached the "Gospel," or sowed such seed as I then possessed, unmatured seed, spurious and adulterated seed, but sown with a good heart. But what kind of ground did I sow it on? The "Gospel" is preached to people who are not ready to receive it, and it is trimmed down to fit unfit people. Mark you, I am not making any criticism of the use of these means to draw people to hear the Gospel. But there is only one thing they can do, in a measure; they may serve to make people think, to twist people's minds in the direction, perhaps, that they ought to follow in order to receive the seed; but these methods sow no seed. It is like a farmer—like my brother here, who a year or two ago was looking for a farm in order to start farming to give some work to the disciples of the Ek-Klesia. And he had to go and inspect the farms, and test them, look over them, and investigate them. Not only so, but he also had to learn a little about farming himself in order to know how to do it. Therefore he got his own education. He got the farm that came to him, which was the very thing God intended him to have. That is like the simile of the brass band, the choir, the procession, and all the other paraphernalia employed to get people to go to church. That is all it does, and the preaching in the pulpit is no more and no less than putting up a few fences, laying the foundations, and preparing the deeds and specifications to get the farm into possession, in order that the seed may ultimately be sown on the ground. That is the beginning, but most people think it is the end too. Most people are quite satisfied if they get a big congregation.

A Sunday or two ago I was passing St Martin's Church about half-an-hour before the commencement of the service, and there was a big queue of people, and I said, "I will go in here, and hear what this man has to say." But after a time I said, "Holden Sampson, don't you think you are a fool? Are you going to stand here for half-an-hour before the service begins, and then stand for an hour to hear a brass band and a big musical programme, with a short intervening address from this clergyman?" "No," I said, "I am going out for a good rest," and I did. But hundreds of people inside the church and outside the church went to hear the music. I do not think many went there to hear, or see, or enjoy anything else than the brass band. The music was the bait to draw them, but no net could catch such fish. Probably my reverend brother did give a short address and say some good and smart things in that address, but that is all it amounted to. It scarcely amounted to *seed-sowing*, and if there was any, it was on *wrong ground*. That is all right so far as it goes, but the Master had to teach us this; that the ground, having been once acquired, has got to be put through certain important processes in order to fit it for seed-planting. The brass band, and the procession, and the amusements, and the concerts, and all that kind of thing, may be all very well to get together a lot of people—though I think it is the wrong way to do it, because it is done from the wrong motive; but it goes no further. That is why we never have any hymns in my lectures, nor anything to make people come. However, sometimes we collect together a fair-sized assembly of people who are attracted by the teaching, who have heard something that appeals to them, that impresses them; or that sometimes makes them very angry. I notice that a lot of people who get very angry at the teaching, never can get away from it; they are compelled to come back again and again, often against their will. The salmon or the trout is very angry with the hook that pierces its jaw, and it tries to get away. It goes this way and that way, but it cannot

get free from the hook, and I am told that the great fun in fishing is sporting with the fish until finally the fish is landed in the net.

But when a farm has been acquired, what happens next? Well, we know a little about that—brother Robert and I. The farm that we got was terribly trodden over with foot-tracks, the ditches were choked up, the hedges were down, and the farm-yards and barns were in a state of filth. They had all to be cleaned out and repaired, we had to put the fences up, and we had to plough up the ground. We had to plough it many times, because it was filled up with weeds, thistles, and hundreds of other things,—and a few of them still remain. But that had to be done, for what is the good of sowing good oats or good wheat on a field filled up with thistles and other trash? That is what we had to do. Then again, some parts of these fields were covered with rubbish, thorns and gorse, and great pieces of stone. How could we possibly plant roots, and potatoes, and celery, and sow corn, in ground covered with crocks and stones and old roots, to say nothing of thorns and gorse? Those had all to be pulled up, otherwise, what kind of a farmer would he be who would simply sow his corn over gorse bushes, crocks and stones, and on ground which has been trodden down by people? All that preparation work had to be done—Purgation and Rectification. But, mark you, a farm cannot be purged, nor can it be rectified, until it is *possessed*. Now, do you know what Self-Abnegation means? It means that you have got to put yourself into Somebody-else's possession. You have to convey yourself, legally, and for ever, over to another Owner than the owner who had you before. Now you cannot do that when your heart is full of egotism, and your head is full of conceits, and your actions and intentions and desires are all circulating around yourself—so much so that some people think that the world cannot get on without them, and without this or that social business or culture, medicine or healing, art or philanthropy, they think that the world cannot get on without them butting

in and putting everyone right and taking all the care that they need of everybody else. Yes, and I will tell you there is no farm in this country superior to the Ek-Klesia farm, in regard to the animals and the birds and all the creatures —even the humans—that live and work on that farm; none get more care and attention, and are more perfectly happy, than those people and creatures. It is so with the humans on the farm only when they are living true and right. If we were to squander our lives in looking after other people's cows and horses, where would our horses and cows come in? Besides, we have got to get possession of the property, and all the property has to be taken possession of in regard to you. I am not blaming you, nor criticising you. You have been doing the best you know how, probably (you know best), laying your life out to do the best you could, even if it was only taking care of a very troublesome husband, or a dog with distemper. But that does not get you out of your own possession. It does not get God any nearer to getting possession of you. The very first thing that has to be done, therefore, is, that God, through His mediators and agents and representatives, has got to get possession of you. Big "you," with a capital "Y." He has got to get possession of that big "I"; that means You. There the trouble comes, because God will have nobody with a *little* "*capital I*" with Him. He has to put a dot on the "I" and make it an "*i*." Then it may be of some use to Him. He has to get possession of you. That means that whoever owned you before has to cease owning you, he has to have not the slightest lien or mortgage on you. It has not to be mortgaged property, on which you pay, say, £100 down, and then pay interest, which means nothing more than paying rent for it, and the property still remains in the previous ownership. No, He has to have you, and you have to pay the price; then He owns you. Let me ask you this question. What kind of an individual can possibly own a person like you, with all those twists and turns and corners and rugged edges that make up that little personality with

the capital "I"—*you*? You cannot get away from that. I am not maligning you. You have rugged edges, have you not?—tempers, and temperaments (which are worse than tempers)? You have all these idiosyncrasies and traits of character that you have not any reason to be proud of. Even your goodnesses, as well as your badnesses, are so full of egotism that they are tainted with your self-consciousness, self-admiration, selfishness, pride, etc.; I am not going through the whole list. You know yourself, don't you? You know you are not as good as you ought to be, even if you would not admit that "*all your righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*" Now, what kind of an owner could possibly own you, even when you look at yourself at your best? When you go and take the chair at a committee meeting for charity and philanthropy, and put on your very best expression, and smile all over your face, and give more than you ought to give—and more time; even under these camouflages and—I will not say pretences, because they are not pretences, they are really exhibitions of yourself that cover over from the observation of the outsider what you cannot cover from your own consciousness and knowledge—what kind of an owner can own you? You say, "But I do not know myself." No, you do not know yourself. If you did, you would be ashamed of yourself. If you did know yourself, you would find yourself a much inferior person to the "superior person" you think you are. You would not be satisfied with yourself; on the contrary, you would be absolutely self-disgusted. Who owns you? The devil owns you. I am not going into particulars how it is so, but it is so. "*Ye are*," as the Master said, "*of your father, the devil, who was a liar from the beginning and the father of lies, and the deeds that he does you are willed to do.*" Now that is true. You may take it, or you may leave it, but it is true. You would not want to own yourself, if you knew yourself as you really are. However, it is very convenient to be able to put yourself over on to the devil, very easy to blame him. But you really cannot do that, because there is a history

behind the devil's ownership of mankind, and there is a history behind the devil's possession of you, that implicates you. He is the "god of this age," of this æon, "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now energises in the children of the great transgression." I can quote Scripture. I can back up anything I say with a Scripture text. Then you have got to change ownership, and the Step of Self-Abnegation is the act of *changing ownership*. It is that particular act that you deliberately make in which you hand yourself over to some other possessor than he who now possesses you, the devil. That is, you hand yourself over to the Lord Jesus Christ, Who stands as God's agent to receive you, the agent and steward of your archetypal eternal Father in Heaven. That is the Step of Self-Abnegation in its first beginning. Now, you have got to be convinced first in your mind and consciousness, that what I have said is true, and some of you are not at all convinced about it—that you are owned by the devil. It is too repulsive and humiliating, and, these days, too old-fashioned. You need to be convinced about that before you will accept such a proposition. You never thought that you did not own yourself, and perhaps it is rather a shock for you to hear that you do not own yourself, but that the devil owns you. I am telling you that the devil does own you.

You may say, "He does not own me."—No, you are right, but he owns what you think is you. He owns what you have thought was you all your lifetime. He does own that part of you which is external, earthly, physical, material, which hides the real Ego, the real Self, that lies buried beneath you, of which you are unconscious. That is what the process of Re-Generation means. It means, to bring you to birth again, for when you are brought to birth in this life, you are brought to birth with the paternity of the devil, and you are all your life drawing the devil's blood, and are clothed in the devil's body, the flesh of matter. But in the organism that was begotten in this world, there is buried or hidden the eternal microcosm of the Divine organism, that

has eternally been the *real you*, which God has eternally owned; but it lies concealed and buried, and dead within you, on account of the "death" that has prevailed or "reigned from Adam" (as Paul puts it) till now; from the time of the Fall until the present time. And the Re-Generation that has to be accomplished in you is to bring to birth that being that is hidden within you. There is the Divine Ego in you, unborn, there is the Divine personality, dead and buried in your sinful flesh of the devil. But it has to be redeemed, it has to be released, it has to be set at liberty, it has to be manifested, it has to be raised from death, brought out of the grave, as Lazarus was brought out, and as Jesus came forth from the grave. The process of Re-Generation, therefore, has to have its beginning, because you have to be transferred over from the devil's paternity, and from the devil's possession, to God's paternity and God's possession; and that is a transference that implies a deep, a long, and not an easy process; a process of Re-Generation, which is, in literal fact, the same thing precisely as what is meant by "*generation*"; it is generation repeated,—*re*-generation. Therefore you have to change ownership, and turn over your whole being, your body, your mind, your soul, your spirit, and the earth body, that sheath or tabernacle of vileness—as St. Paul describes it, "That tabernacle of vileness," and you have to go through the processes that could only possibly accomplish it in order to restore it, to purify it, to rectify it, and finally to be Re-Generated.

Therefore the Step of Self-Abnegation, and the processes that follow are doing this particular thing—changing ownership. It is the deed of transfer or conveyance, that hands you over, body, mind, soul and spirit, to the Great Master, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Sower that will ultimately sow the seed of Eternal Life in you. But, as I said before, after the transfer, or conveyance, of the property that is embodied in you, to the Great Master, then the Great Master has to do something. He could not do anything before,

because you did not belong to Him; you still belonged to the devil. No matter what kind of a character you were, or how religious, virtuous and choice you were, you still possessed the devil's blood, the devil's body, the devil's paternity, and the characteristics of the devil; so you have to take the Step of Self-Abnegation before you can undergo the process of Re-Generation, in the Path of the Divine Mysteries. Now, here is the point I want you to understand very clearly to-night. You cannot take the Step of Self-Abnegation until you know exactly what you are. The farmer who buys a farm would never dream of doing it without having it properly surveyed and examined, so that the title deeds may be exact, and conform to all the representations that were made of that particular property. There is quite a process to be gone through to find out whether the property is according to schedule, and the surveyor comes along with his chains and poles and measures the ground, and draws a plan of it. Every acre, every yard, every foot, is mapped down; every hill, every gate, every building, every pigstye, every barn, every well, every pond, and so forth, is all put down in a clear manner on these plans. And it has all to be checked over and over again before it is finally brought to the lawyer, and the deed is signed, and the property is actually conveyed over to the farmer. That is what you have to do, and it is a hard business, because you have to measure yourself, you have to gauge yourself, to fathom yourself, to count yourself up, to take an inventory of all that is part of you. You have to find out everything about yourself, and that is where the trouble comes, because it is a long business, a very tedious business, and a very humiliating, mortifying business; for you do not know what kind of old unknown cess-pools are inside that property of yours, choked up drains and sumps, houses and barns filled up with vermin, with rats and mice, and all kinds of horrible things, and you never knew they were there, because everything was decorated so nicely on the outside. When an owner wants to sell a farm he white-

washes the buildings and makes everything look nice, and it is only by investigating that the defects which are inside are discovered. Sometimes a foolish man buys a farm before he knows that these noxiousnesses are there, and then he finds himself "done." But you cannot do that in turning yourself over to the possession of God, because He compels you to examine yourself, and to confess yourself, and it is a terrible experience to examine yourself, and uncover yourself, even to yourself. You will find that in your head there are all sorts of notions that will astonish you. You never thought you had them; and that the truest things you have had in your mind turn out to be untrue. And your notions about people and things and yourself will have to go through a very severe course of scrutiny, and all your little habits, and characteristics, and egotisms, and foolishnesses will come up to the surface, as mud rises to the surface of a stagnant pond when being cleaned out. You may be very spiteful, and you did not know you were spiteful. You thought it was smartness of speech, but it turns out to be spitefulness; and countless more revolting self-disclosures come to you. You can never find these things out until you are shown them, until the searching light reveals them. Of course the mole that burrows under the ground is used to the ground in which it burrows, and could not possibly realise any other kind of environment. But when you are changing your nature, as you will, if you are seeking to follow the Path, you are beginning to lift your head above the environment in which you have been previously living, and then you find that the life you have been living, and the environment, do not suit you any longer; you are disillusionised of yourself. You will also begin to notice that your senses become finer, and you are not any longer satisfied with the company you used to keep, and the kind of life you used to live; you get higher vistas and horizons and skies of greatness, and of wisdom, and of knowledge, and of goodness, you never dreamed of until you put your head out of the rut in which you had been living in the past. And so

you go on circling around yourself, cycle after cycle, time and time again, discovering all the bad habits, the evil things, the noxious things, that lie buried beneath the superficiality of your excellent and wonderful personality, and you realise that the personality you thought you were is nothing else than a mere mask covering the evil, the rottenness, and the sin that was you in reality. Of all the hundreds of people who are now following the Path, or seeking to follow the Path, every one has told me that the nearer they get to the Divine Head, the nearer to the Truth, the more disgusted and revolted they are with the rottenness of their own self, which formerly they were so pleased with, which everybody flattered.

And having gone through all this investigation and measuring of your property, then comes the time when you have to turn it over. And then you do not try to clean *yourself*. You could not do it if you tried. I know a dear brother now, who has been following the Path for a long time, but he is troubled with bad thoughts, and he gets desperate. He goes about the streets whistling and singing and humming, to pretend to himself that he is happy, to try to drown those bad thoughts that keep cropping up in his mind. It is the biggest mistake he could make. It is like when you sow seed of dandelions, tares, or thistles in good ground—or somebody does it for you—and the seed lies there, and you cover it over with beautiful earth, with the idea you are burying it. That seed will begin to fertilise, and it will grow into a big crop, to your own discomfiture. That is what happens. The only way to get rid of those seeds is to scrape them away, to spade them away, and burn them out. Therefore you cannot cleanse yourself of these things. They have got possession of you, and you cannot cast them out. You cannot do it any more than a pigstye can clean itself. Therefore you have got to hand it over, to be cleaned and treated, to be purged and rectified, and that is exactly what the Path, especially in its preliminary course, is intended to do. You have no longer possession of yourself. You have

turned yourself over to God through Jesus Christ. You have said : " Oh, Master, take me over, I cannot purify myself, I cannot rectify myself, much less can I Re-Generate myself. Then please take the job over." And the Great Master takes it over, and first of all, He starts cleaning you out. From the stony ground, He takes the stones away ; from the thorny and the gorsey ground, He takes the thorns and the gorse ; from the nettle ground, He takes the nettles ; from the ground that is covered over with all these things, the crocks and the stones and the rotten things that have been thrown on this ground, the tins, the cans, the broken bottles, and things that other people have thrown on this field, that have made the field noxious and absolutely unfertile, He cleans it all out. In farming, you do not leave all these things there and scatter the good seed on that kind of ground. That is what the Great Master, Who is your Agriculturist, will do for you. He will take the hoe, the spade, the rake, the pickaxe, the plough and the harrow, and all the other harsh instruments of torture and remove the obstacles, the obstructions, the filth, the dirt, the rubbish and rottenness, and all the rest of the trash out of your being. And that is a job that is not done in two minutes or five minutes. It is not done on the " penitent form " ; that is only one tiny step in the direction. Nor is it simply by being " converted," or, as some people used to call it, " getting religious," or starting a little philanthropy or good deeds of your own, or by " penance " or any sacerdotal interventions and religious devotions. You are sowing seed on ground that has not been prepared. And for a long time the process is Purgation, to get all the muck out of you, if you will excuse the language. In the North of England we call it " mook." I went to call on a farmer in Lancashire, and his wife said to the little boy, " John, where is you father ? " He replied, " he is up in the meader, spreading ' mook.' " That has all got to get out of you, to be taken out of you. And then, after that is done, there follows Rectification ; because, don't you see, that " spreading mook " is a very good illustration.

That is what politely we call "manuring," and it is a very wholesome application to the soil. But you would not "spread mook" on a field covered with gorse and rubbish. You take that away first, and then you "spread" the "mook." And the processes of preparation for the sowing of the seed I put in this way. In the first process on the Path of the Divine Mysteries you are covered, interspersed and permeated with all the works of the devil and the world and the flesh, and those accretions of evil, filth and abomination have to be removed. And now I will use another simile. There is another thing which has to take place. After the *Purgation* process you resemble a cork-screw. If you lay a cork-screw on a flat surface, bottom downwards, it stands up vertical, *but it is all crooked.* Well, when you take the Step of Self-Abnegation, and you go through the Path until you reach the Seventh Gate, through all the different processes of Initiation in the course of Re-Generation all the dirt and the filth has been taken from you, but you are still *crooked*, like the cork-screw; the next process therefore is *Rectification.* That is like straightening out the crookedness of the cork-screw, and it is a very difficult business, and very hard, as I will try to explain. When land has for some length of time been neglected and uncared for, the roots of the weeds and thorns, and gorse and thistles have gone down deep into it, and that land gets the habit of being unfertile, sterile. It is not made fertile by the first process. You may take out all the weeds, and the gorse, and clean out all the ditches, and repair the hedges, and do everything possible to prepare that soil for the seed, but it is no good putting corn in that soil. You may plough it, and harrow it, and manure it, that is all right; but you do not put corn in ground of that kind. You have to prepare it for the corn. You have to put various kinds of roots into it, for instance, potatoes, turnips, and mangel-wurzels, season after season. And when you have taken these previous crops out, after a great deal more ploughing and harrowing and fertilising, then it may be

possible that the good corn may be sown. But it is only after these preliminary and seasonal operations.

When, therefore, you have been purged and purified and made clean by that one only process, the "precious blood," or life essence of Jesus Christ, the life essence that will fill the veins from which the devil's blood, the uncleanness, the abominations, have been eliminated, so that your arteries flow with the precious life-blood of Jesus Christ instead of the devil's blood; that does not take away the *old habits*. You know it is bad to be proud and spiteful, deceitful and egotistical, and the desire to be these things has gone; you hate them; but the *habits* of all these things are still left behind, and those have to be corrected, and corrected, and corrected, often by very hard and difficult circumstances, by many rebuffs and rebukes which the Great Master will give you. That is what we call *Rectification*, and that process of Rectification may last all your life, and become more and more difficult and hard, and piercing, and poignant, the older you grow, and the nearer you attain to the "stature of the full age of Christ." That takes some people many years—to attain to the character and nature and habits of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. But there is never an ending without a beginning, and the beginning has to be made, and the reason why I have put this before you in a somewhat conversational and crude fashion, is to show you what the Step of Self-Abnegation means to you. Because until you have realised the supreme immensity, the significance of Self-Abnegation—until you have come to realise it, you cannot possibly take it, nor carry it out. It would be a false start unless you have first come to realise the real inwardness, the meaning and significance of it. How could you possibly deny yourself, your existence, until you had got so tired of your existence that you did not want it any more? If you have the slightest clinging to yourself, you cannot perform the act of Self-Abnegation, and you have therefore to come to an end of yourself first. You cannot posture, nor pose, nor pretend, nor can you justify yourself,

and that is what you may be inclined to do, and many people do for a long time before they are capable of coming to an end of themselves. And it is only when we cease to posture, and pose, and pretend, and to try to justify ourselves, especially when we are brought face to face with reproach, rebuke and chastisement, and when the Master speaks to us sharply about our faults, and when we have actually to do penance for our faults and mistakes and wrongdoings—until we reach the stage where we put life itself to the test, as to whether this thing or that thing shall go from us, as to whether we are willing to part with the last of our possessions or the things we cherish most in this life —when we are put to these tests—when you come to yourself, and say to yourself, and say to God, " I am absolutely indifferent whether I own or disown anything in the world ; indifferent whether my wife clings to me or falls from me, whether my home drops away from me, whether I possess or do not possess a bawbee in this world, whether my business disappears and I am left footsore, homeless and penniless. I am absolutely indifferent to all that. Let come what will, I hate myself, and anything that clings to myself I am ready to shed from me." As Paul said, " I count all things as dung, that I may win Christ." That may not mean that you are necessarily going to do it. It may not mean that your wife or husband is to desert you, or that your money is to go away from you. I hope it will not. It may not mean that that little bit of money you have got in your stocking, you have to throw out, and say, " I am going to be a beggar, I am going to be an ascetic." It does not mean that. You do not make a choice at all. All you say is, " Here goes self ! " That state of Indifference is the greatest test in the world, because when you reach that state of Indifference, you have proved that you have come to an end of yourself. And then it does not matter how many bad marks your mistress puts on your exercise ; it does not matter if you get the sack ; it does not matter if you are despised and rejected by everyone, and people

think you are a fool and a fanatic—as one gentleman said to one of my brethren of me, "Mr Sampson is a fanatic." It does not matter if they deem you a rogue, an outcast. In fact we rather like it. We are absolutely indifferent to good or ill, to pleasure or pain, to death or life, to victory or defeat, to possessions or no possessions, to good report or evil. When you get to that state you are prepared to take the Step of Self-Abnegation, and to start to fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil—the things you hate most in this life. That is the beginning, but it is not the end. That is only where you take the Step of Self-Abnegation. The best thing to do when you hate yourself is to give yourself a kick, and you give yourself a kick by turning yourself over to the Great Master. You say, "Here, I am ready! Here is the property, here is the whole thing, measured out, marked out, designed by the surveyor! I have surveyed myself through and through, and here I am with all the rottenness, the uncleanness, the vermin, the rats and the mice, the dry-rot in the farm-house; here it is, all measured out, take it over!" "All right," says the Great Master, "now you write your name down here, and I will write My Name down here, and all the angels in Heaven and in Paradise, and all the Brethren of the Ek-Klesia shall witness that signature, and you shall be Mine, and then I will start cleaning you out, Purging you, Rectifying you, that ultimately you may attain to Re-Generation."

LECTURE IV

THE SEED-CORN : WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH IT ?

THE probable impression that has fixed itself upon your mind in regard to the teaching that you have already had is that you have not been taught anything at all ; that you are—or the majority of you are—exactly where you were when you first started to attend the Lectures. You know very well that you have not done anything, gone anywhere, progressed a bit. I did not expect that you would. In fact I should have been very much perturbed in my mind if, on the first hearing, you had said, " Here goes, I am going to follow this teaching right away." You have to go round the question a good deal ; you have to spend a great deal of time going round the question. It is not a question to be decided as if you were going to a shop to decide whether you were going to buy a piece of beef, or mutton, or steak, where you have to decide on the moment and pay for it. In this case it is not so. It is too serious. It is a matter of life and death, of eternal importance, of infinite significance. How then could I encourage you, or could I honestly ask you to espouse a truth that you had not investigated and understood in the most thorough fashion ? Do you think I want you instantly to cut out all the past—am I asking you to do that ? You have been perhaps a Theosophist for all these years, or you have been a religious person according to the particular persuasion you have followed ; do you think I am going to ask you to turn your back on those traditions, faiths, ideas and beliefs, right on the spur of the

moment? No. The principle, nevertheless, that is enforced in the Teaching of the Path of the Divine Mysteries is the one that Jesus Christ enforced when He said, "Go, sell all that thou hast," then, "come and follow Me." And this business of trading "all that we have" is not a simple affair. It is very complex, because it includes mostly all your traditions, all your beliefs, all your ideas and notions, all the pet and darling truths that you thought were absolutely first principles, you have to go over all these, find out their missing quantities, their emptinesses and limitations, and then "sell" them. But mark you, you "sell" them; you do not give them away. You do not cut them out, but you sell them, and when you sell a thing you sell it for profit, a return. Then you have to sell these things for profit, and unless you get profit from your sale, you do not get much out of the sale. Therefore you will get a profit. It may be you have to invest your property and wealth and investments, spiritual, intellectual, religious or moral, or even material, and wait for the profit to come in dividends in a future period. And you sink them down into nothing, and it makes you think, and imagine that you have got nothing in return. Yet, by patience and perseverance in doing the right action, and consistently following out the principles for which you have sold everything, you will ultimately reap the full dividend, and it will be a hundred fold—100 per cent. I say that, in the course of the teaching I have delivered from this platform, you have not learned anything, you have not got anywhere, it has not taken you a step. But, as I have said, that is just as it should be. You have got to be cautious, and not presume upon mere casual and general understanding adduced in your consciousness by temporary emotions caused by admiration of the presentment of the truth to you; but you have to let it sink in and permeate your mind and your soul, that ultimately it shall be like seed that is sunk into the ground, that does not bring forth its fruit immediately, but in due season.

Therefore, what has impressed me so much in this deliverance of the truth, has been that I have been only talking to you in *parables* all the time. Every lecture and every lesson that has been given has been a parable to you. I have scarcely more than touched upon the Divine Mysteries, more than simply alluding to them. What I have said has not been anywhere near approaching to the Divine Truth that, Heaven knows, I long to impart. All I have been able to do is to give you a general idea in parabolical form of what underlies these wondrous figures and symbolisms that you have heard expressed by me. Sometimes the parable has been rather humorous, and I have seen a smile rippling across your faces. Sometimes it has been decidedly non-humorous ; it has been more like severe spear-thrusts, and you have gone away really sorry for yourselves, if you have not gone away angry with me. But you have had the parable, the symbol, the truth conveyed to you in metaphor and figure and verbal speech and expression, and that is what I ask you to take into your consideration. Some of us have been students of the books to a certain extent. We bought " *Theou Sophia*," and the other books, and we have given a little time and attention to their study, but we know no more now than we knew at first, because, as everyone complains—I do not mean to say they complain with anything like the spirit of murmuring—but they say, it is so very deep that they cannot possibly understand it, and they have not understood it. So I say to them, " That it is true ; you cannot understand it, and you will not understand it, and you never will be able to understand the Sacred Principles of the Path of the Divine Mysteries, with the intellect." The brain is utterly incapable of comprehending these wondrous truths. It reminds me of my brother here. About ten or twelve years ago he wrote me a letter, the first letter he ever wrote to me before I met him. It was a very long letter. In those days he used to write very long letters, but he does not write such long letters now. He gave me a whole list, which filled a couple of sheets, of the books that he had

read, and the wonderful range of literature that he had absorbed—Eucken, Bergson, Darwin, Spencer, to say nothing of the lights of even more recent times. There he had got his book-shelves adorned with these various volumes, well-thumbed and marked and scored. I do not know whether it was in Brother Robert's mind that they would impress me at all that he was a very learned man, a man worthy of being definitely treated as a savant or a scholar, but the interesting part of it was, it did not influence me at all. In fact I put that letter on one side and never answered it. Then he wrote me another letter. He wrote quite a number of letters, and went on writing letters for six or eight months, if not twelve months. He persevered in writing letters, and I never replied to one of them. I do not think I even bothered to read them through very carefully. But what I do admire about Brother Robert is this; he held on, although I gave him many rebuffs and silent non-treatment. It was a sort of "absent treatment," as they call it in "New Thought." But he still persevered, and then, at last, he travelled all the way to Worthing on purpose to meet me face to face, and he did meet me face to face. I cannot remember the result of that first interview. It was the first of many more interviews. Then when I started to give a few lectures in London, many years ago now, he attended those lectures, and he has been coming and going ever since. Now he has "come" and is not "going" any longer. He has found his way, and that without any initial assistance from me, because I did not give him any assistance at the first. It was his absolute perseverance which carried him on. When he first read the books published in those days, he knew that, at last, he had found the truth, though he did not understand it a little bit—not a minute portion of the teaching did Brother Robert understand in those days. But it struck home, it appealed to his reason, to his scientific sense, to his moral sense, and to his spiritual or religious sense, and it is only within the last year that Brother Robert has come to understand the Truth in its fulness, in its wide capacity, in its breadth, its

length, its height, its depth, and so at last he has come to know, or to " comprehend " it. As St Paul puts it in the Epistle to the Ephesians, " That we may be able to comprehend the length, and the breadth, and the depth, and the height, and to know the love of God, which passeth knowledge." And how did it come to pass ? Because he never tried to understand it. He learned that it was absolutely futile to put his brain to work to come to an understanding of the Truth. He took a long time, and sometimes made a terrible mess of it. There was a time some years ago, when he thought he knew it all, and could teach me one or two things, and I had to put my foot on him very heavily. I had to knock the pride out of him. When I say " I," the Great Master made me do it. He was the " *Deus ex machina.*" I was very hard on him, in order to show him that all his understanding meant nothing at all. You know what the word " comprehend " means—the Greek word that is translated " comprehend." It does not mean to " understand," when Paul says " that we may be able to comprehend the length, and the breadth, and the depth, and the height, and to know the love of God, which passeth knowledge." That would seem to be a contradiction in itself, for how can you " comprehend " a thing that " passeth knowledge " ? The meaning of " comprehend " is to grasp all round a thing, to grip it all round, to *compass* it. When we speak about God being " incomprehensible," as dogmatically He is spoken of as being, it means that we cannot get all round God, we cannot *compass* Him. He is too wide, too great for our human understanding to go round Him, to acquire a perfect comprehension or circumspection of His attributes, His qualities, His personality. It is the same with this, only we are told, " that we may be able to comprehend the length, the breadth, the depth, and the height, and to know that which surpasses knowledge." How is it to be done ? In the first place, I have been " comprehending " the Path of the Divine Mysteries in your hearing ; going round it, giving you little glances, " compassing " it, in general terms, with

symbolic implicits. I have been taking you around, as I was once taken round a big circus at Olympia. I was introduced to the manager or the head of the circus, and was invited to a private view. He took me all round the circus, he showed me some of the magnificent horses, and put them through their paces. He gave me a " comprehensive " view of the circus—a sort of private view. Well, I have been giving you this " private view " of the general principles that underlie the Path of the Divine Mysteries, but I have not given you the horses and the stables and all the paraphernalia. It does not belong to you. You have not got them yet. But what it means is that you *may* possess all these things ; and you have a comprehensive glance at them during these lectures ; and, on the strength of the evidence, you may put your faith in their verity.

Never despise parables, or metaphors ; they are the " evidence of things not seen," the ground of your faith. Always treasure them in your minds, because they are really truths —truths concealed in metaphor ; Verity, Wisdom, wrapped up in figure and symbol. But what I am so anxious to see brought about is a school, an association, a little nucleus, or a group of those of you who, having received the Truth in its comprehensive aspects, will study it in its concrete and subjective form. I do not want you to think about " gates," although they may be " Golden Gates," or like those beautiful gates of Buckingham Palace or Hyde Park Corner—beautiful gates to be looked at, beautiful pieces of metal, and of wonderful fabrication. But I want you to think of what those Golden Gates mean, what they imply. Wherefore, in a general assembly, I (or the Great Master using me as His telephone wire) have been dealing with you as He did with those that He addressed in His own lifetime, when He said, turning to His disciples—and there were not a great many of them, perhaps a dozen—" *Unto you it is given to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but unto them that are without all things are given in parables.*" And what is the parable for ? It is to arrest attention. It is to act as

" ground-bait " to draw the " fish," so to speak, towards the " net " that will ultimately catch some of them, and they will be taken possession of. Therefore, be warned of this ; that the Divine Mysteries are incapable of intellectual understanding. You have to put your brain, so to speak, out of work, to give it a rest, a " lock out," to give it a holiday. But what will happen to you—and I can promise you this with the greatest assurance—is, that the Truth, when you once commit yourself to it, when you once take hold of it and " comprehend " it, will understand, will " comprehend," " compass " you. In other words, it is a matter of growth, a process that goes on in you, and if you put yourself in the right position, in the right status before God, and before your teacher, in regard to the Truth—in the position of a little child that has no understanding and no experience, it does not matter what kind of a fellow you are in the world, you may be a very fine man of business, you may be a splendid commercial traveller, and able to get fine orders for your firm, you may have the capacity for invention, or you may be a great artist, or a wonderful authority in literature, in fact you may make literature a particular line of mental education and thought—it does not matter what capacities you have in the world—happy are you if you have those capacities, because it is a great asset in this world in which the disciple lives " in the world," but is not " of the world," but capable of making a success of it whilst in the world—and the Path of the Divine Mysteries is not going to negative that, it is not going to turn you into a fool, an idiot, or an incompetent—you are going to have possession of your faculties, and they will be sharpened, infinitely sharpened, and you will want God to make use of those faculties for His own cause in the world. If you are a skilful fisherman, the Great Master will say, " Go out and catch fish." But, mark you, as it was with Peter and the sons of Zebedee, when one day Jesus wanted some money to pay His obligations in this world—and He never ignored His obligations—He said, " Go out into the sea and catch a

fish," and when they had done so, they not only caught the fish, but there was the money in the fish to pay the obligations which Jesus Christ needed to pay. That is exactly what will happen to you. If you have the capacity of making money, or of doing service, material service for the Great Master, He will say, "Go ahead and do it. I want your assistance, I want your help, I want your capacities, use them for My sake, and no longer for your own self-gratification." And this I am sure you will find is true; that whenever you go out fishing for the Master, and you haul in a netful of this world's goods, you will get with it Wisdom, you will get with it just that extra benefit that will come from hard work, and hard service in this world, that will make work itself, and the success or the failure of it, redound with a glory which it could never possess if it were only done for your own sake, or for material ends.

But I am saying that you cannot understand the Truth, and, in order to do so, you have to put your brain out of work. But having shown you that the brain is very useful in its own sphere of action, I am going to try to show you now what is the sphere of action that the brain exercises in a Disciple, and in an Initiate of the Path of the Divine Mysteries. I will give you an example. If I had not a brain in this head of mine I would not be able to speak to you. If I had not a brain that understands a little about verbs, adjectives, substantives, adverbs, history, science, Greek, Latin, and all the rest, how could I frame the sentences, or teach with adequate lucidity? My brain is being used all the time to frame and express in language the message I have to give to you, and in terms agreeable to the truth, in science, history, etc.; and my brain is constantly being sharpened. I am an omnivorous reader, and I take the newspapers and current literature. I do not read the newspapers and books because I am specially interested in politics, or current thought, or anything of that sort. I am not in the slightest degree interested in these things. But I read the newspapers as I would read a novel. I do not say that

they do not stir my imagination; of course they do. But I read the newspapers with no other object than the consciousness that I am learning all the time. I love to read a good summing up by a judge, because there you get the judicial mind, and method of speech. If I want to be eloquent I read Lloyd George in the House of Commons. I used to read Gladstone's speeches, and Disraeli's, and there was nobody I admired as a speaker more than Lord Randolph Churchill in days gone by. But they have lost the art of speaking in the House of Commons in these days. I think the "closure" in the House of Commons was a very great mistake on this account, because it has nipped oratory, and spoilt that wonderful power of rhetoric that our politicians, in days gone by, were able to present to appreciative minds. So you see the brain is a necessary organ. But I do not originate thought with my brain. Perhaps you will think it would be rather better if I did. Do you know, there is a book that I wrote in the year 1902, and it has been admitted by many to be one of the most deep and profound books that have been written for many centuries. (I don't say this myself, I am quoting others), and it is called "*The Life and Discourses of the Lord Jesus Christ.*" It is out of print now, so you cannot get it, but there are many people who have that book, and who treasure it almost as much as they treasure their Bible. How did I write that book? I will tell you. I wrote it in Salvation Army "Shelters," and other "barracks" for homeless men. I wrote it in the streets sometimes, when I had not anywhere to lay my head. I wrote it on scraps of paper that I begged, borrowed, or stole, because I had no money to buy paper. I wrote it when sometimes there were 300 or 400 rough and noisy and noisome (!) men present, and the atmosphere was as thick and savoury as you can imagine it would be in a crowded Salvation Army Shelter. I wrote it amidst unspeakable noise on a rough bench. That is how I wrote the whole of that book, and I could not possibly have done it if I had merely been using my brain. Start to write a sermon or a

book under such surroundings, and you will find how impossible it is. I did not write it from my brain, and I cannot explain to this day how I wrote it; it wrote itself; Another Hand guided my pen. Just as when I am speaking to you, I never know beforehand what I am going to say, or, when I am writing, I never know what I am going to write. I simply put my pen to paper, and sink my brain down to emptiness, and the Great Master uses my brain as a channel, and not as an originator. And thus I find that, following that practice, as I have done for many years, I have " more wisdom and understanding than the ancients, and I know more than my teachers " (" yet not I, but the Christ which dwelleth in me "). That is what the Psalmist said, and it is so. But it is not with the brain, but with the Inward Spiritual Illumination which enters into a pure and open mind, an open understanding, an open soul, from Heaven itself, and thus in a sort of mechanical fashion I write—not by " automatic writing " as the Spiritualists do, because my brain is in exercise all the time in a state of great lucidity. I weave the Word out just as the man who spins, or the woman who weaves from yarn, or whatever material is being woven or spun—the raw material—turning it into thread or silk. And it requires an enormous amount of mental ingenuity to weave the Word accurately, because Divine Wisdom is not easily translated in terms of language, it is very difficult indeed. Therefore it requires great alertness, equipment, and concentration of the mind. But fortunately the concentration of the mind is not by the will of the reader, or the thinker, or the writer. It is not the will that concentrates the mind, but it is the Divine Spiritual Illumination that grips the mind, and the brain cannot get away from it, it becomes enslaved to it. You may have all the noise and disturbing atmosphere around you when you are working on those lines, they do not affect you in the least degree. That is the way in which you are going to understand the Divine Wisdom.

Therefore the first secret, the first movement, the first

action places you in that status with God, in that condition in which your brain can itself use the Divine yarn, and weave it out in silken threads. But it can only be by first getting the yarn. You cannot make silk thread out of nothing, and all the ingenuity and skill of your brain cannot originate that which does not exist. Therefore we understand the old Eastern term, which still exists, still survives, with a very clear understanding of what it means. That is, the term "*Logos*," which is a Greek word for the "*Word*" or *Thought of God.* That is what we have to possess. It is the pure, undiluted, uncircumscribed, whole Mind of God Himself. The Thought of God, the Illimitable Thought of God, the universal, yes, the catholic Thought of God, the whole cosmical Thought of God. That is what you have to possess. That is what has to come to you. That is the raw material from which you will gradually weave, and weave, and weave. And the silken threads will ultimately go to fashion the fabric—that beautiful tapestry of the Divine understanding that will ultimately be yours, fabricated in your own mind —the Logos of God, the Thought, the Word of God. And that is a reality. It is something which is perfectly scientific. It is a philosophical conception. But it does not mean sentimental, religious, or dogmatic comprehension. It has nothing whatever to do with academics or religion. It is something deeper, greater and more comprehensible than religion, to which, indeed, it is wholly incomprehensible, especially the religion that is manifested in these days, when people trust another person to do their religion for them, and do not, as a rule, give two thoughts to religion themselves. There are many noble and very beautiful exceptions, but generally it is the parson who fabricates the religion from the pulpit, or the Churches in their Creeds and Articles and theologies, and the people in the pews simply go about as marionettes, not working it out for themselves.

The Logos of God is what you need. It is pure, unadulterated Truth. It is not dogma, nor doctrine, nor

confessions of faith, nor articles of religion, nor creeds. It is absolutely incontrovertible, and cannot be expressed in terms, or words, or language, and yet it is so fine and so infinitely minute in its proportions, that it can find room in the tiniest little soul there is in this room to-day. It is like that seed of corn that you plant in the ground, and it brings forth an ear of corn, and you collect that ear of corn, separate the corn from the husk, keep it for another season, and plant every one of those seeds of corn into the ground, and each one produces another ear of corn ; and thus, in the course of numerous seasons, you have sacks full of wheat out of that one seed grain. That is precisely what the Logos of God is. It is the Seed Thought of the Divine Mind that He plants into the prepared soil, and it reproduces itself, it increases, it spreads, until finally there is not a barn big enough in your constitution to hold all the Seed-Corn that springs from that one little tiny Seed, the Logos that is sown in you ; and therefore you have to let it burst out, let it go, and it will pour out of the granary of your mind in streams of seed-corn that will sow themselves into other people's souls, and hearts and minds. That is the Logos of God, but you have to be prepared to grow it, and to garner it. The Seed Corn of the Logos of God could never be handed down, delivered and sown into unprepared soil, nor stored in an unprepared mind. You have to have the soil prepared. Your soul, your mind, your body, have to be fitted to be the ground and the receptacle of the Logos of God. I am speaking in parables, but it is a parable which you can take, and break, and search, and investigate for yourselves, and it will teach you the truth I am trying to impress upon you, which I cannot do in detail in an audience of this kind. But what you have anyhow clearly to acknowledge, and what I think has to be very plainly put to you, is that you have to be prepared for it. You have to be cultivated. And it is not an easy task even to do this thing, much less to submit to it, because the Seed-Corn of the Divine Logos is unadulterated, and incapable of adulteration

—it is absolutely impossible to pervert it. You cannot transform or dilute it into something less or weaker than it is, and therefore you cannot adapt it to your conditions ; you have to adapt your conditions to it. And the ground in which the Seed of the Divine Logos is to be implanted must be in conformity with the purity of the Seed-Corn itself. That does not mean that you have to have a brain filled up with rules and laws and terms and teachings. It does not mean you have to build a kind of temple to the Logos in your brain and mind for the Logos to be implanted into. It does not mean you have to have any understanding of the Logos. You never have any understanding of the Logos at all, but when you get the Logos planted into you, it is then that the Logos becomes your understanding. Then, little by little, the Logos permeates your density, your opacity. Then it breaks through that stony part of you, the education and the culture, and you are emptied of everything. It is only the " broken and empty vessel " that, as Paul says, is " meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto all right action," and He will never impart to you that Spiritual consciousness, that Divine Illumination, that Heavenly Celestial Inspiration and Thought, and power of expression, until you are fit for it, until you are prepared for it. Yet it is waiting for you. It is here, ready to be poured upon you. Saul of Tarsus was a very cultured and scholarly young man. He was so efficient and so scholarly and successful that he became a member of the council of the Jewish Sanhedrim very much younger than anyone else traditionally was allowed to enter that very august and exclusive body of men. Besides that, he had a very powerful brain and energy. He was a man of intensely strong convictions—a man of tremendous power and nervous force. He was brave, he was zealous ; so much so, that everything he undertook he went into thoroughly. For this very reason, he came to understand and know the Truth, he " persecuted the Way," and all who professed it, and the Logos of God was not in him at all. But he had a wonderful

understanding, and a wonderful capacity to correspond to that wonderful understanding, whether wrong or right. Then he had that glorious vision of Jesus of Nazareth Whom he was "persecuting," and he was reminded that he could not "kick against the pricks." Then he succumbed, and he was interviewed and instructed by the teacher Ananias, and he was put through his first beginnings of the Path of the Divine Mysteries there in Damascus. Then for three years he disappeared altogether, wandering in the desert of Arabia, and in communion with God he went through that process of Purification and Rectification, of which you heard me speak last week; and also of Revelation, because it was at that period of which he speaks in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians; "I knew a man in Christ, fourteen years ago, whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth. I knew such a man caught up into the Third Heaven. I knew a man in Christ," he goes on, "whether in the body, or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth. Such a man caught up into Paradise." That was the experience he had. That was his way of describing his entry into the Golden Gates of Initiation in the Divine Mysteries, when his spirit did not leave the body, but expanded from the body, transcended the body, and was lifted up to the infinity of the cosmos, in which he visited the Seven Planetary Circles, from the First Heaven to the Seventh Heaven. It was then that he received his Initiation in the Divine Mysteries, ultimately to attain to the final degrees of Re-Generation and Perfection. But the processes of his Initiation occupied three years in the Arabian desert, following the "kicking against the pricks," and that previous period of preparation and co-ordination of himself, when ignorantly "persecuting" the Path and the Great Master. That was a very important point. Saul of Tarsus was a wrong-headed young man, but in his wrong-headedness he did right, and he was perfectly right in persecuting Jesus and the Ek-Klesia as he did, up to a certain point, because in doing so he thought he was doing right. He knew no

better, and it would have been most reprehensible if he had not done what he did (although it was wrong), because he believed that such a thing was right. He was perfectly justified in persecuting the Ek-Klesia because he thought he was doing God service. That explains my attitude possibly towards those who do not agree with me—my brethren in the Church, the spiritualists, the theosophists and all the other "ists." They are doing their best according to the light and understanding they have got. But everything they do is wrong, and if I speak somewhat satirically and somewhat harshly of the things that they do wrong, I do so in order to prevail upon them to do the right thing and no longer to "kick against the pricks," but to understand the Lord Jesus Christ in His true aspect and personality. I am not blaming them at all. I do not blame the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Pope of Rome, or this man, or that man, though I absolutely disagree with them, though I am at daggers drawn with all their attitudes, practices and dogmas. I am at daggers drawn against the principles they teach, but God knows I am not at daggers drawn against the people themselves. I am like the Lord Jesus Christ standing before Saul of Tarsus in the way that leadeth to Damascus. I would simply say, as the representative, the voice, of the Logos of God, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And if there is a Saul of Tarsus here to-night who is honest, true to principle, and willing to be convinced, willing to hearken to the Voice of the Logos, speaking through the messenger that brings it, well, let that man turn round, and instead of persecuting the Ek-Klesia in any sense whatever, or ignoring the Ek-Klesia, or despising the Ek-Klesia, let him go — yes, right away — to "Damascus," and Jesus Christ will send some sort of Master-Ananias to open the way more perfectly to that man. The Logos therefore requires prepared ground for it to enter into. That is the reason why we who are teachers of the Sacred Principles of the Divine Mysteries can only speak to you in parables as yet, but to those souls who have come into

Ek-Klesia, who have accepted the Teaching, who have accepted the principles, and are ready and willing, at all costs, whether of life or death, to follow them, we are ready to minister, to measure out, and impart the principles of the Divine Mysteries themselves, without parables. We dispense with parables when the individual has ceased to be an "enquirer," has ceased to be a "seeker," and has become really and truly a "candidate" for "discipleship." Then the solid food, the strong meat of the Kingdom of God, is divided out to you according to your capacity to take it, according to your capacity of assimilation, and your capacity of understanding. But before that there has to be the enquirer stage. After the enquirer stage, there must be the seeker-stage, and following the seeker-stage there must be the novice-stage, and in all these elementary stages there is given the parabolical teaching and the disciplinary teaching, but when you have arrived at the stage at which you wish to be a *disciple*, then you have to be shown where the missing quantities are in you, what are the things that debar and hinder you. You have to be shown how to strip yourself so as to go through the "needle's eye," and enter the "strait gate." That is very uncomfortable and very disturbing, because the faithful teacher does not blind himself to a disciple's faults. It is one of the *raisons d'être* of discipleship. They may be purely personal faults, but he digs deep and points out those faults in no mincing terms. He calls a spade a "spade," and he does not call it merely an "agricultural implement," simply to soften it down. I have known people go away from me—even while I have been lecturing here in the City of London—there have been some who have come earnestly and ardently, and accept in a measure the teaching, until the point comes of the first rebuff from the teacher. As the Americans say, "he is a wise guy, is this teacher," meaning that the teacher always takes everyone at his face value. And if you write to me, or come to me, or speak to me, and say you accept the teaching and will follow it, I take you at your word. But,

mark you, if I find that your actions are not consistent with your face value, if I find that you are not living up to your word, do you think I am going to let you go without a rebuke ? No. Therefore there are some who do not like the treatment. They thought the teacher a sort of " gentle Jesus, meek and mild," that " butter would not melt in his mouth," who would never say a harsh word to anyone, especially to a disciple or a seeker, and they go away offended, and say I am inconsistent, I am a tyrant, and so on. Well, I can tell you that stones have to be broken, and you cannot break stones with a darning needle or a spoonful of golden syrup. You must have a hammer made specially for the purpose, wielded with a tremendously powerful use of elbow and muscle. I have never been in a workhouse or a jail, as an " inmate "—*not yet*—so that I do not quite know what stone-breaking is, but I am told it is something of that kind. And so I come to the point, my dear brother and sister. This is the last of the lectures. This hall will not again be used as a platform for Ek-Klesia Teaching, for some time to come at any rate. Some of you may never see me again in the flesh, or hear my voice. You have heard the teaching. Some of you may have only come here for the first time to-night. Well, you have got the parables, and perhaps you will be sufficiently interested—knowing I am not talking to you the Wisdom to-night, but only giving you parabolical pictures of the Wisdom to invite your attention, to guide your mind, and to put you right in the direction of that Path which I have not yet even attempted to open to you in direct form.

What are you going to do with it ? Are you going to let it go by ? You may do. It is entirely a matter of your own choice. Some time ago I received a letter from a lady in South Africa. Years before she had picked up one of my early books and it had completely absorbed her. And then what happened ? She put it on one side. It was too much for her, she had too much to do at the time, too many material things that she stuck to, and she went along for

years and never thought anything about it. But she never got on. Her husband was not a success. She was worried. She had sickness in the house and one disaster after another happened, as you know such things do happen in South Africa. It is not quite a desirable country to live in for an easy life. Then suddenly she remembered this book, and fished it out, and she wrote to me, and from that time that dear soul has been following the Path as near as she possibly could. And all those years she had put it aside. But the hook was in the jaw, and though she swam away with the stream quite a long way, when the time came the line brought her nearer and nearer—as it is doing at the present time—to the acceptance of the truth. But why should we delay it? A dear sister wrote to me a few days ago who has been following the teaching for many years, and she said, "A few weeks ago I said the greatest desire of my heart was to go right through the Path in this lifetime, but," she said, "I have got so far now in the Path that I do not care whether I die before I go right through the Path or not." But you have to make a start. A start has to be made. You cannot go anywhere without a start. That is what I ask you to consider. The truth has been presented to you roughly, briefly, rudely, stammeringly, and very faultily, but it has been given to you without stint. You have got it. You have heard it. The instrument has been a rude instrument in the hands of the Great Master, but it may be the very fact of its rudeness and its ruggedness that makes it more forcible—without choosing fine words, shaping rhetorical sentences, trying to be poetical and oratorical, you have got it straight from the shoulder, and what are you going to do with it? I am not going to take it back from you. You have got it. Go home and let it sink—that seed-corn—until the rocks are broken up, the stones are taken away, the thorns and the gorse are uprooted, the nettles and the thistles are taken away and burned, and the ground has been fertilised and prepared, harrowed and ploughed and rolled, so that it may be fine, soft and tender

soil, unadulterated with sin and evil, unadulterated with self-consciousness and egotism and pride, but pure and free and fertile. Then will be the time when in God's love to you He will hand you the Seed of the Logos of God through Jesus Christ, from Whom alone you can receive it.

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